

BARWON SOUTH WEST

Victoria's region of opportunity



**Regional
Development**

Regional Development Australia
and Regional Development Victoria



Introduction

With its reputation for resilience, strong sub-regional organisations and a robust and diverse economy, the Barwon South West Region has every reason to be optimistic about continuing its significant role in the national economy.

This brochure presents an overview of the Barwon South West Regional Strategic Plan 2012–2015, produced by the Regional Development Australia Barwon South West (RDA BSW) Committee. The Plan explores the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities that affect the entire Barwon South West Region. It also identifies the common goals and objectives of the G21 and Great South Coast sub-regional plans.

In order to add real value in the crowded governance landscape of the region, the RDA BSW Committee will continue to advocate for G21 and Great South Coast sub-regional priority projects, but will also focus particularly on six key areas of immediate whole-of-region risk or opportunity. These areas are: **Food and Fibre, Digital Economy, Skills and Education, Energy, Tourism and Population Growth**. This brochure includes an overview of each of the key focus areas and how they address the goals and objectives of the Barwon South West Regional Strategic Plan 2012–2015.

A number of important documents underpin the Barwon South West Regional Strategic Plan. They include the G21 Geelong Region Plan, the Great South Coast Strategic Regional Plan, the G21 Economic Development Strategy, the Great South Coast Cumulative Impacts Study and the two sub-regional Growth Plans.

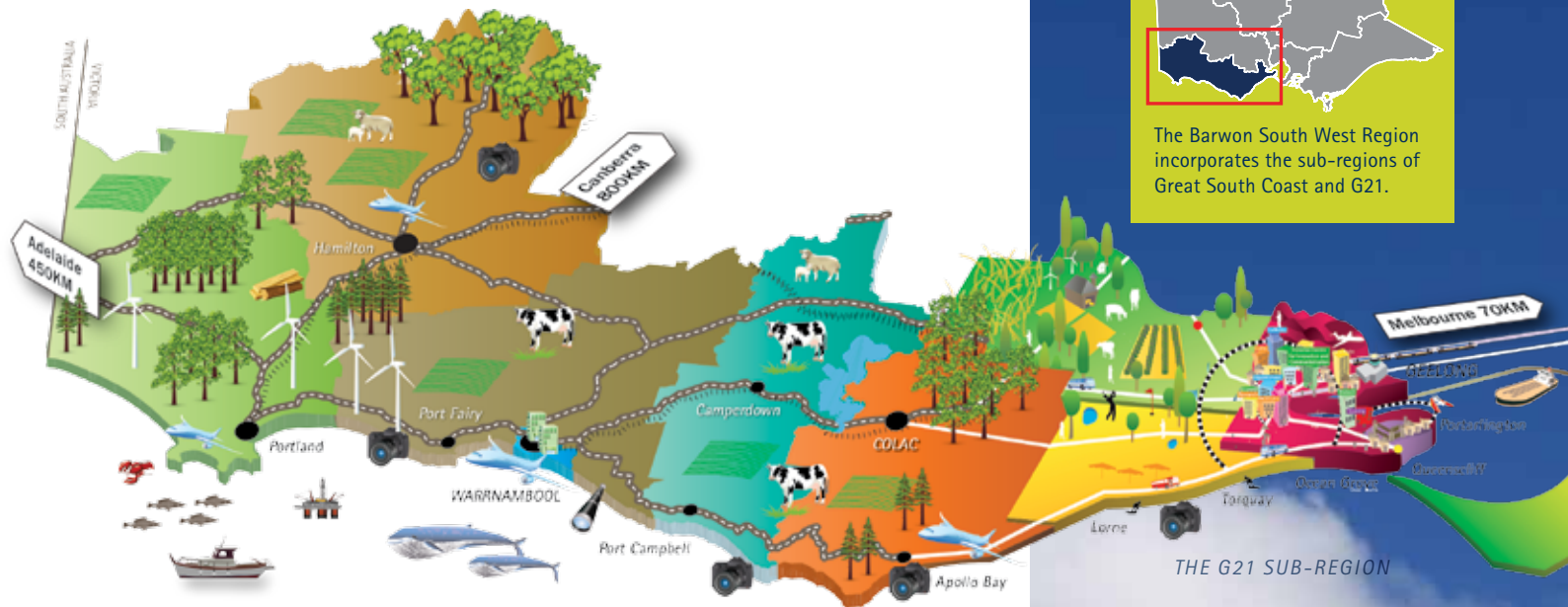
The complete Barwon South West Regional Strategic Plan is available for download at www.barwonsouthwest.org.au.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank RDA BSW Committee members. Their contributions empower the RDA BSW to build and grow local opportunities that will make a real difference across the Barwon South West region.



Bruce Anson

CHAIR, REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AUSTRALIA BARWON SOUTH WEST COMMITTEE



THE GREAT SOUTH COAST SUB-REGION

THE BARWON SOUTH WEST REGION

The Barwon South West region stretches from the tip of the Queenscliff Heads to the border of South Australia. It has a population of approximately 367,000 people and includes some of Victoria's fastest growing municipalities.

The region comprises two sub-regions: G21 and Great South Coast (GSC). Both sub-regions have established alliances of regional stakeholders to complete extensive consultative plans and projects. The Barwon South West has three economies: one inland which is founded on agriculture; one on the coast that is dominated by tourism and amenity

lifestyles; and one in Geelong which has a diverse economic and social base.

Our main industries are manufacturing, retail trade, health care, construction, education and training, agriculture, forestry, fishing and tourism. Our key infrastructure assets include deep sea ports, road and rail freight networks and Avalon Airport.

We have higher than average rainfall and wind, providing ongoing competitive strengths in agriculture, food and new energy production. Our coastline includes marine national parks, surf beaches and the iconic Great Ocean Road.

The Barwon South West Region incorporates the sub-regions of Great South Coast and G21.

The Barwon South West region boasts:

- Victoria's second largest city, Geelong
- Nearly 40% of Victoria's coastline
- Tourism assets – Geelong Waterfront, the Grampians, the Shipwreck Coast, the Surf Coast and the Great Ocean Road
- Manufacturing – Food processing, automotive and aluminium production
- Produces milk, beef, sheep, broad acre cropping, forestry and timber
- Infrastructure – Deep sea ports, road and rail freight and Avalon airport;
- Booming health, social services and education sectors;
- Emerging new energy and biotechnology.



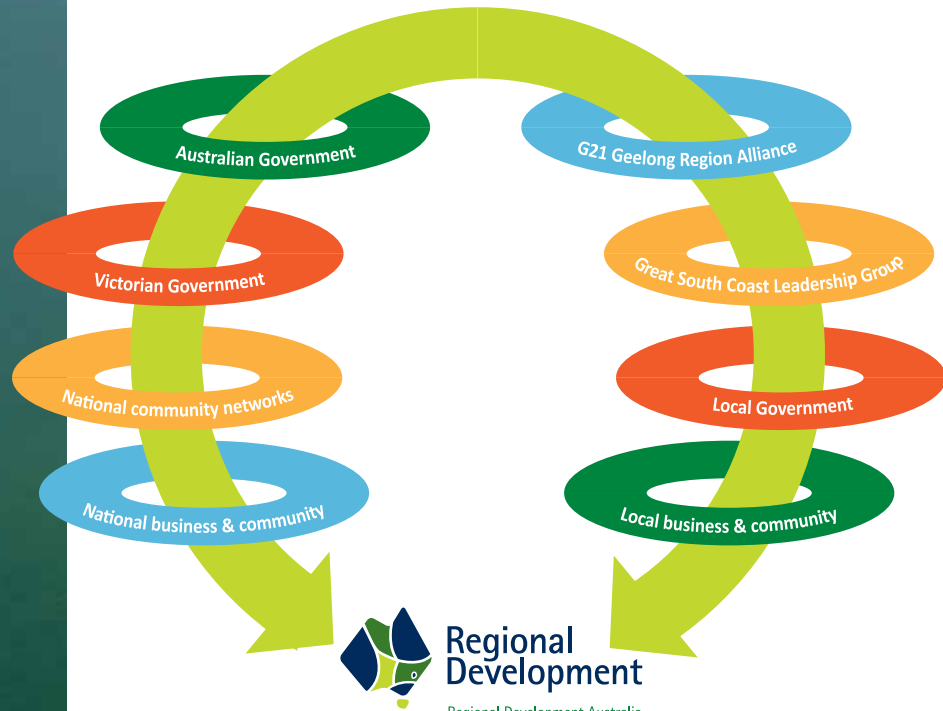


RDA IN THE BARWON SOUTH WEST

An Australian Government initiative, Regional Development Australia (RDA) is made up of 55 committees of local leaders who work with all levels of government, business and community groups to support the development of their regions. Each RDA Committee represents a region of Australia, and all of Australia is represented by an RDA Committee.

The RDA Barwon South West Committee comprises ten representatives from business, industry, government, education and training providers from various locations across the region. Membership includes cross-representation with regional organisations such as the G21 Geelong Region Alliance, the Committee for Portland and the Great South Coast leadership group. The RDA BSW Committee meets as necessary and at least on a bi-monthly basis.

By its willingness and capacity to cut across boundaries the Committee will work to add value to G21, Great South Coast and other regional voices. It is committed to demonstrating leadership across the full breadth of regional issues.



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BARWON SOUTH WEST

PLANNING IN THE BARWON SOUTH WEST

The Barwon South West Regional Strategic Plan 2012-2015 draws upon the research, consultation, objectives and priorities of the G21 and Great South Coast regional plans, to identify and address issues and opportunities common to the entire Barwon South West region. The plan is framed upon five goals common to both the G21 and Great South Coast regional plans:

1. A RESILIENT AND DIVERSE ECONOMY
2. AN EXEMPLAR OF ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY
3. EDUCATION AND OPPORTUNITY
4. A CONNECTED BARWON SOUTH WEST
5. EMPOWERED COMMUNITIES

The Barwon South West Regional Strategic Plan presents an ambitious agenda to deliver real and lasting growth across the entire Barwon South West region. The RDA BSW Committee will advance this agenda by continuing to advocate for sub-regional priorities, but will also focus on six key areas in which we can add the most value on a whole-of-region basis. These key focus areas are:

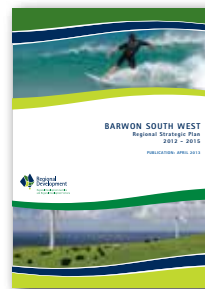
1. FOOD AND FIBRE
2. DIGITAL ECONOMY
3. SKILLS AND EDUCATION
4. ENERGY
5. TOURISM
6. POPULATION GROWTH



www.G21.com.au



www.greatsouthcoast.com.au



www.barwonsouthwest.org.au



An overview of the

OUR GOALS:



A Resilient and Diverse Economy



An Exemplar of Environmental Sustainability

OUR OBJECTIVES:

Position the Barwon South West for economic growth in a global market.

Protect and enhance the natural assets of the Barwon South West.

OUR TACTICS:

Industry transition - Support the growth of high value emerging industries such as advanced manufacturing, agriculture, forestry and professional services. Support the transition of threatened industries.

New energy - Reduce barriers to the development of new and renewable energy sources such as wind, wave, geothermal, gas, biofuels.

Food and water security - Support industries that build upon our region's strengths in food and water security and export capacity.

Tourism - Develop tourism infrastructure to enhance and protect internationally significant tourism assets.

Research and Innovation - Build upon the significant successes of RMIT and Deakin Universities, CSIRO and various smaller organisations of the region in producing innovative products and technologies.

Sustainable land use - Balance commercial, residential and environmental land use requirements.

Focus on building vibrant commercial centres, providing land for industry growth, managing coastal settlements to protect coastal ecosystems and provision of affordable housing choices.

Climate change - Reduce our environmental impacts. Respond to water security requirements and opportunities. Improve our capacity in emergency management. Manage our coasts, waterways, hinterlands and communities to minimise climate change impacts.

Sustaining natural resources - Protect and maintain our region's strengths in water security and biodiversity. Adapt to take advantage of emerging opportunities such as increases in extreme winds and changing rainfall patterns.



BARWON SOUTH WEST
Regional Strategic Plan
2012 - 2015



The RDA BSW Regional Strategic Plan 2012-15 identifies five goals common to the G21 and Great South Coast sub-regional plans and presents strategic objectives for each of these goals.

The Plan also outlines regional strengths, weaknesses and opportunities and explores tactics for delivering the goals and objectives of the Plan.

The complete RDA BSW Regional Strategic Plan is available at www.barwonsouthwest.org.au.

RDA BSW Regional Strategic Plan



Education and Opportunity

Develop a smarter, more skilled, more resilient community and workforce.

Higher education attainment rates – Increase the number of young people undertaking and completing tertiary education courses – particularly young people from disadvantaged socioeconomic groups.

Skills for growing and emerging industries – Make sure that our secondary and tertiary education facilities provide courses that support current and emerging industries. Create opportunities for re-training programs for all age groups.

Better access to education and training – Reduce social, transport and economic barriers to education and training opportunities – particularly for people from disadvantaged socioeconomic groups.



A Connected Barwon South West

Improve infrastructure to enable economic competitiveness, environmental sustainability and social cohesion.

National Broadband Network opportunities and challenges – Business readiness. Community education. Encourage innovation. Identify and pursue digital economy opportunities. Roll-out delay strategy.

Transport infrastructure – Build on the region's strengths in road, rail, sea and air infrastructure to support the growth of current and emerging industries; expand Victoria's export opportunities; and reduce logistical and residential growth pressures for Melbourne.

Social networks and infrastructure – Support our growing and ageing population by strengthening volunteer networks; improving equitable access to services; and supporting new residents from diverse cultures.



Empowered Communities

Develop healthy, liveable, equitable communities.

Address entrenched disadvantage – Improve community strength in areas of disadvantage by providing good local infrastructure and services, economic and social activities and affordable housing choices.

Improve health and wellbeing – Reduce preventable chronic disease. Provide more places and spaces for active lifestyles. Improve mental health and wellbeing and stop rising trends in obesity.

Increase the capacity of health and community care – Improve physical and social infrastructure in areas of high need and high growth. Address fragmented service delivery models and health inequalities. Strengthen community networks.

THE SIX KEY FOCUS AREAS:

The RDA BSW Committee has identified the following areas of immediate opportunity or risk for priority support: (1) Food and Fibre, (2) Digital Economy, (3) Skills and Education, (4) Energy, (5) Tourism and (6) Population Growth.

KEY FOCUS AREA 1:

Food and Fibre

BSW REGIONAL PLAN GOALS

✓ A Resilient and Diverse Economy

A growing world population and changing food choices in Asia will provide new opportunities for the Barwon South West's significant food and fibre industry.

✓ An exemplar of Environmental Sustainability

By changing agricultural and land management practices we can reduce emissions and chemical use, generate income and create a more sustainable food supply.

✓ Education and Opportunity

On-farm determinants of innovation and productivity sharply increase with tertiary education, labour availability, farm size and use of contract services.

✓ A Connected Barwon South West

The Ports of Portland and Geelong are international gateways for food and timber exports. Avalon Airport could provide direct freight links to the Asian food market.

✓ Empowered Communities

Foods produced by new technologies can bring benefits such as improved human and animal health, nutrition and food safety, greater affordability and better tasting food.

By 2022 we expect the Barwon South West region to be able to achieve a fifty percent (\$1.095 billion) increase in the production of food and fibre, taking it to at least \$3.286 billion.

Food processing was Australia's largest manufacturing industry in 2010-11, accounting for nearly 22 percent of manufacturing gross value added.

The State Minister for Water, Agriculture and Food Security has set a target of doubling the production of food and fibre over the next 20 years.

The Great South Coast's dairy industry produces thirty-eight percent of the state's milk and a quarter of the national yield. It is our number one export earner.

However, the region's activity extends beyond dairy to include extensive beef and sheep grazing, broad acre cropping, forestry and wild catch fishing. The sector is highly export orientated with most of our wool, wheat and dairy products sold to overseas markets, along with nearly half of our beef and a third of our lamb.

The agriculture, forestry and fisheries industry currently employs more than 10,000 people across the BSW region.



KEY FOCUS AREA 2:

Digital Economy

✓ A Resilient and Diverse Economy

Broadband will provide SMEs with opportunities to improve business processes, business models and provide services to new local and international markets.

✓ An exemplar of Environmental Sustainability

NBN's infrastructure can facilitate video-based interactions between patients and health care professionals, reducing the need for travel across the region.

✓ Education and Opportunity

NBN infrastructure will enable better access to education and skills training, particularly for those in rural and remote regional locations.

✓ A Connected Barwon South West

The delay in NBN rollout to the western parts of our region constitute a major risk to the BSW maintaining a competitive position within the digital economy.

✓ Empowered Communities

Broadband services reduce inequality of access to community services. There is a direct link between broadband availability and social disadvantage.

We expect the entire Barwon South West region to achieve at least the Victorian average for new broadband application development from industry and take up of the NBN offer from homes and businesses.

The Victorian Competition and Efficiency Commission has concluded that the primary factor detracting from liveability in many regional areas is poor access to services and infrastructure particularly health, education, transport and information communication technology.

Access to fast broadband infrastructure is a critical component of the BSW region's economy, liveability and social cohesiveness. Key drivers and impacts influencing telecommunication standards in the region include the increasing

population, increased participation in global markets (particularly in dairy, timber and mineral sands products), climate change impacts, e-health and the transition to a low carbon economy and national productivity imperatives associated with an ageing population.

NBN rollout is scheduled to occur in many parts of Geelong and the Surf Coast over the next 2 years. However in the Great South Coast region, NBN rollout is not expected to commence until 2017.

KEY FOCUS AREA 3:

Skills and Education

BSW REGIONAL PLAN GOALS

✓ A Resilient and Diverse Economy

The region is at a significant disadvantage through a lack of skilled residents available to fill highly skilled jobs. This is an issue for business development and growth.

✓ An exemplar of Environmental Sustainability

Innovative delivery of education and training opportunities will increase local attainment rates and reduce the demand for transient skilled workers.

✓ Education and Opportunity

Success in our higher education and research institutions is building our capacity in knowledge-intensive industries such as biotechnology, ICT and carbon fibre.

✓ A Connected Barwon South West

Educational options at tertiary level will provide for the diverse needs of the region, while also serving to attract students from within and outside Victoria.

✓ Empowered Communities

Skills acquired in early childhood and school years are the necessary foundation for developing skills that contribute to a healthier and more productive community.

By 2022 we expect the region's education attainment levels to be at least the equivalent of the Victorian average. We will not accept inadequate supply of skilled labour as an obstacle to realising the growth and development of our key industry sectors.

The Bradley Review* affirmed that the reach, quality and performance of the nation's higher education system is central to Australia's economic and social progress. The education and training sector therefore has a critical role in maintaining and enhancing the liveability, sustainability and productivity of the region.

The BSW region has lower than average Year 12 and tertiary education retention rates. At the 2011 Census only 25.4% people aged 25 to 34 had a bachelor

degree or higher, compared to the Victorian average of 36.4% and only 1.8% of people aged 25 or over were attending a university or other tertiary educational institution (Victoria 2.6%).

Improved integration of the education, training and employment sectors will lift the region's low Year 12 completion rate, increase participation in tertiary and non compulsory qualifications and develop the culture of lifelong learning linked to changing employment opportunities.

* Australian Government Review of Higher Education 2008

KEY FOCUS AREA 4:

Energy

✓ A Resilient and Diverse Economy

Local services and industries will benefit from the significant investment in new and alternative energy generation in the region.

✓ An exemplar of Environmental Sustainability

The use of biomass as a renewable feedstock for the production of electricity, heating or bio-fuels is an untapped opportunity for rural development.

✓ Education and Opportunity

Significant labour and skills development opportunities are emerging as we transition to a low carbon economy.

✓ A Connected Barwon South West

The integration into the national electricity grid of renewable energy from our region will make a significant contribution to Victorian and national Renewable Energy Targets.

✓ Empowered Communities

There is considerable growth potential in this new area from which the region is well positioned to generate new business and employment opportunities.

To be Victoria's leading lower emission energy generating region, producing at least 20% of the state's renewable energy supply by 2022, with local industry and services directly benefitting from investment in the sector.

The Barwon South West region is rapidly building its profile as Australia's renewable or alternative energy hub. Our energy solutions include a range of technologies including wind, geothermal, gas-fired, bio-diesel and wave powered energy generation.

Wind energy projects with an investment value totalling more than \$9 billion are currently underway in the Barwon South West. This represents 68% by number and 80% by value of total energy projects in the region.

Further opportunities exist across the region to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support a low carbon growth economy through use of alternative energy sources including waste to energy and cogeneration.

Over the next ten years, the BSW RDA will endeavour to stimulate the development of low-emission energy that is suited to our energy resources and concentrate effort on ensuring local businesses benefit as much as possible from the development of this sector.



KEY FOCUS AREA 5:

Tourism

BSW REGIONAL PLAN GOALS

✔ A Resilient and Diverse Economy

We need to increase the value of tourism to strengthen and diversify our economy. Opportunities exist to increase yield, especially in international markets.

✔ An exemplar of Environmental Sustainability

Development of appropriate and acceptable facilities will ensure a viable and environmentally sustainable industry.

✔ Education and Opportunity

To fully realise the potential of our tourism industry we will need to increase the supply of labour, skills and indigenous participation.

✔ A Connected Barwon South West

Broadband access and digital economy education of SME's is critical to the growth of our tourism industry, particularly in emerging international markets.

✔ Empowered Communities

Related small business opportunities include accommodation, dining, local produce, local art and craft, boat and fishing charters and tour operators, for example.

By 2022, we aspire to attract no less than nine million visitors per annum to the Barwon South West region, generating direct tourism expenditure of at least \$3 billion.

The Great Ocean Road attracts more than half of all international tourist overnight stays and more domestic tourism expenditure than any other location in Victoria. Despite this, our tourism industry currently employs a disproportionately low percentage of our workforce. The majority of the employment is located in coastal areas and around national parks, and much of it is seasonal in nature.

To better develop and protect our region's significant nature based and Indigenous heritage tourism assets

we must address the under valuing of our natural capital; incorporate nature based and Indigenous heritage tourism products into mainstream marketing systems; increase medium to high capacity quality accommodation options; and improve coordination within our tourism sector.

In order to grow tourism value our initiatives must increase the number of visitors to our region, extend the length of their stay and increase their average spend per night.

KEY FOCUS AREA 6:

Population Growth

✓ A Resilient and Diverse Economy

The future workforce for our growing economy will include people and families who have migrated to the area in response to skills shortages.

✓ An exemplar of Environmental Sustainability

The adoption and implementation of Regional Growth Plans will ensure that our environment is protected and enhanced as the population increases.

✓ Education and Opportunity

A framework for workforce planning will ensure that we have the skills, knowledge and job opportunities to support a growing and diversifying economy.

✓ A Connected Barwon South West

NBN opportunities and development of road, rail, port and airport infrastructure is critical to sustainable population growth in the Barwon South West.

✓ Empowered Communities

Population growth creates demand for services and helps to renew and diversify communities.

By 2022 we expect to have a regional population of not less than 480,000 people. The percentage of bottom quartile income earners in the region will be no higher than the state average.

About 367,000 people lived in the Barwon South West region in 2011. As the region abuts the nation's largest population growth corridor (west of Melbourne), we are confident of achieving a regional population of more than 480,000 by 2022.

Population growth brings with it increased spending, particularly in the areas of housing, transport, education, retail and health. It will also bring additional labour and professional skills to the region. The economic challenge is to ensure that the benefits of population

growth are shared across the region and that the growth supports skill and workforce development agendas.

Other big challenges of a growing and ageing population include the increasing demand on water resources, waste management practices, health services and available land for housing, industry and employment.

Retaining youth and attracting families and professionals to support the economy may be the primary driver for managing population growth in the region over the next ten years.

RDA Barwon South West project prioritisation process

ASSESS

Current issues and opportunities.

IDENTIFY

Projects that address the objectives of the RDA Barwon South West Strategic Regional Plan.

PRIORITISE

Activities that are:

- approved by the G21 or Great South Coast sub-regional alliances; or
- address the objectives/priorities of this plan.

IMPLEMENT

Actions that will address the unique circumstances of our region; align with Australian, Victorian and local government priorities; and have good opportunities for partnerships and funding.

MEASURE

Impacts, influence and outcomes.

PROJECT PRIORITISATION

How projects are identified

Projects that address the objectives of the RDA Barwon South West Regional Strategic Plan 2012 - 2015 must be submitted for the consideration of the RDA BSW Committee, via the G21 Region Alliance or the Great South Coast Group. A project will only be considered for funding or other developmental support after it is endorsed by one of the sub-regional groups.

Assessment criteria

Sub-regional pillar groups continually identify, assess and deliver regional projects in their area of expertise. To date more than 300 regional projects aligning with the objectives of the sub-regional plans have been assessed against criteria including:

- (sub)-regional, social, environmental and economic benefits;
- strong alignment with the objectives of the G21 Geelong Region Plan or the Great South Coast Regional Strategic Plan;
- available leadership and human resources; and
- external (all levels of government and/or private sector) support and funding potential.

Sub-regional Priority Projects are determined by the G21 and Great South Coast Group Boards against the same prioritisation criteria.

Approval process

Projects endorsed by G21 or the Great South Coast Group can be submitted to the RDA BSW Committee to be considered for whole of region support.

What's next

The RDA BSW Committee are now seeking to advance regional projects in the six key focus areas outlined in this brochure.

We will do this by:

- identifying and supporting current and planned projects of government and non-government regional stakeholder groups in these areas;
- exploring new private sector partnership opportunities; and
- facilitating linkages to current State or Federal Government programs, priorities and funding streams.

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AUSTRALIA BARWON SOUTH WEST COMMITTEE

Chair



BRUCE ANSON

Chief Executive, Warrnambool City Council. Regional Cities Victoria Group representative. Member of BSW Regional Management Forum. Member of Deakin University Warrnambool Community Leaders Group, & Regional Policy Advisory Committee.

Co-Deputy Chair



ED COPPE

Principal of Strategic Investment Management. Chair of G21 Geelong Region Alliance, Director of Committee for Geelong, Geelong Chamber of Commerce and Geelong Community Foundation.

Co-Deputy Chair



PETER DORLING

Business Manager, Avalon Airport. Executive Director of the Committee for Geelong from 2001-2012. Trustee of the Committee for Economic Development of Australia and the Geelong Performing Arts Centre. Chair of the Northern Futures Program and Board member of the Victorian Channels Authority.



ELAINE CARBINES

Chief Executive Officer, G21 Geelong Region Alliance. Chair of Arts for Life. Member of ADRI Advisory Committee, Karingal Foundation, National Celtic Festival Committee, Geelong Business Club Committee.



ELIZABETH COKER

Mayor, Surf Coast Shire. Member of G21 Region Alliance Economic Development Pillar, Surf Coast Tourism Board, Geelong Otway Tourism Board, Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) delegate, Rural and Economic Advisory Committee, Surf Coast region.



DR KAYE SCHOLFIELD

Senior manager of RMIT University's outreach centre in Hamilton. Member of the Glenelg and Southern Grampians LLEN, Western District Health Service's Community Advisory Committee, GHCA Advisory Board and the Great South Coast Strengthening Communities Pillar.



RUTH GSTREIN

Councillor, Corangamite Shire Council and Office Manager at Bostocks Creek Design and Drafting. Board Member of the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV). Board Member of Camperdown P-12 College.



DR ANN HODGKINSON

Academic teaching and research specialising in regional economics, industrial organisation and environmental economics. Extensive local government experience with metro and regional councils in Victoria and New South Wales.



ANDREW WESTLAKE

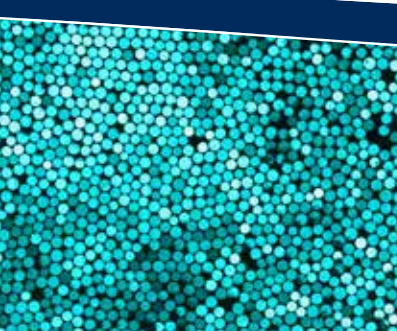
Group Operations Manager - Midfield Meat Group Warrnambool. National Chairman of the Australian Meat Processor Corporation Environment Committee.



GEOFFREY WHITE

Councillor and former mayor, Glenelg Shire Council and Board Member of the Committee for Portland.

The RDA Barwon South West Committee is made up of local leaders with broad and diverse skills and experience, as well as demonstrated networks within our region. They are appointed through an open and public Expression of Interest process.



Regional Development Australia Barwon South West Committee:

- Provides advice about our region to the Victorian and Australian Governments
- Works closely with the G21 & Great South Coast regional alliances
- Provides better access to Victorian and national expertise, experience and resources
- Supports evidence based opportunities
- Links government, business and the community
- Progresses important regional projects faster

Contact

PETER ANDERSON
Executive Officer
Regional Development Victoria
Telephone: 03 5223 2104
peter.o.anderson@rdv.vic.gov.au



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BARWON SOUTH WEST



An Australian Government Initiative



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