

Project Fact Sheet: Whole-of-water-cycle management capacity building program design

Background to the project

The water cycle includes all forms of water – recycled water, rainwater, stormwater, wastewater, groundwater, potable water and water contained in our rivers and bays.

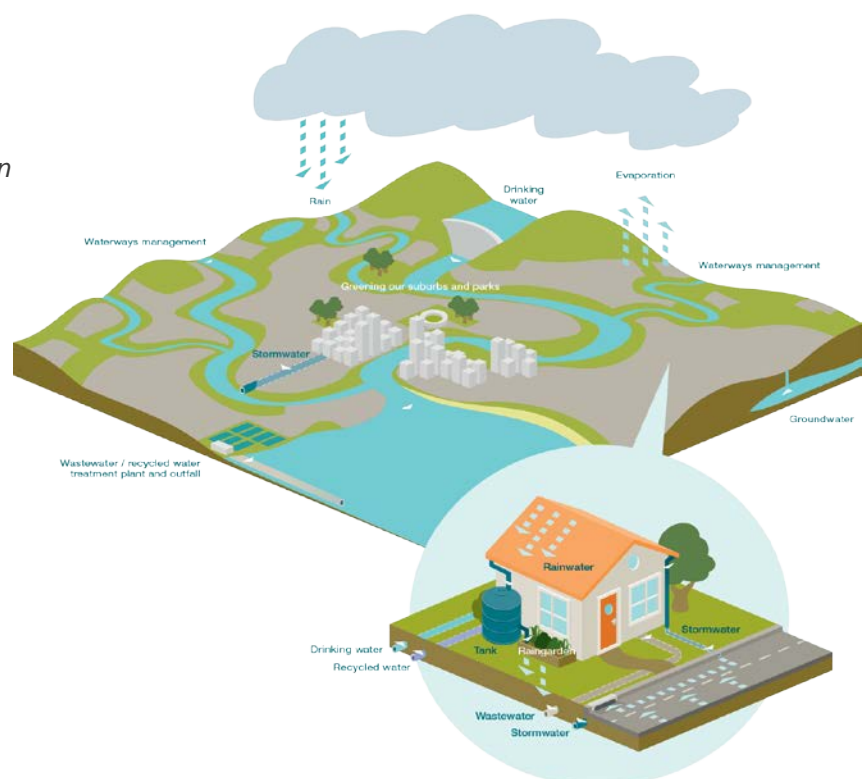
The Office of Living Victoria's role is to deliver urban water reform; transforming the way our water cycle is managed and how water cycle services are provided in Victoria. This transformation will involve a shift from predominantly centralised catchment-to-building water and wastewater systems to a whole-of-water-cycle management approach.

Whole-of-water-cycle management is an evidence-based approach to using all available water resources – rainwater, stormwater and wastewater – in ways that best deliver liveable, sustainable and productive communities. Effective whole-of-water-cycle management ensures that precious drinking water is used for drinking, and alternative sources of local water are used for non-drinking purposes.

This approach moves away from the traditional emphasis on technical issues of supply (such as the size and location of major infrastructure) to an understanding of how best to utilise our knowledge of the entire water cycle system and its drivers – regional geography, topography, geophysics, hydrology, economics, climate and demography.

The Victorian Government's *Melbourne's Water Future* strategy, released in December 2013, signals the start of a new era in whole of water cycle management. It is the blueprint for changing the way we plan and manage the water cycle in cities and towns to make better use of all available sources of water. The strategy acknowledges a level of uncertainty about the future and builds greater flexibility and resilience into our water system to deal with changing circumstances.

Whole-of-water-cycle management considers the intrinsic interconnection of all parts of the water cycle and all parts of the community.



The need for capacity building

As our approach to water cycle management shifts, the Office of Living Victoria is aware that increasing understanding and awareness of whole-of-water-cycle management in Victoria is important. While the consultation phase of *Melbourne's Water Future* demonstrated the wide range of knowledge and the level of expertise and innovation that already exists in the Victorian water sector, there are also likely to be particular areas which require the development of new skills by traditional stakeholders to achieve whole-of-water-cycle solutions.

The Victorian water sector is already highly skilled in traditional water management, however the Office of Living Victoria is committed to supporting the transition to also deliver best practice whole-of-water-cycle management. This is reflected in Initiative 3.7.6 of *Melbourne's Water Future* which commits to further building skills and capacity in the water sector.

The intention of this commitment to capacity building is to meet whole-of-water-cycle management related skills gaps and organisational needs to enable individuals and organisations to better play their part in the sector.

Our whole-of-water-cycle management capacity building program design

To begin understanding and meeting the capacity gaps in the Victorian water sector, Clearwater is working with the Office of Living Victoria towards the development of a whole-of-water-cycle management capacity building program for key stakeholder groups within the Victorian water sector, including contractors, consultants, developers, local government and water authorities.

The project will be conducted in two stages:

1. analysis of whole-of-water-cycle management capacity needs for key stakeholder groups (consultants, water authorities, local government, developers and contractors); and
2. design of a capacity building program to meet the whole-of-water-cycle management skill gaps identified.

The first stage of the project will involve in-depth interviews with a range of stakeholders, as well as an industry focus group and a workshop with the Office of Living Victoria representatives. It therefore provides an exciting opportunity for industry stakeholders to directly communicate their needs relating to whole-of-water-cycle management and influence the future support available to them.

The second stage of the project will draw on the expertise of a range of whole-of-water-cycle management and capacity building specialists to design a program that meets the needs identified in stage one and will also incorporate a rigorous program evaluation methodology.

Clearwater is Victoria's leading capacity building program for whole-of-water-cycle management. This project draws on their extensive experience in innovative, best practice capacity building and in-depth knowledge of the Victoria water sector.

Further information

For any queries about the background to the project, please contact Katia Bratieres from Clearwater on 03 9679 7326.