



IMAGINE
THE YARRA

DRAFT YARRA STRATEGIC PLAN

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

SUBMISSION COVER SHEET

Submission Number:	YSP06
Name (Individual/Organisation):	Individual
Attachments:	Attachment 1 – Written submission

Draft Yarra Strategic Plan Submission



26/03/2020

To whom it may concern

Please accept my submission regarding the Draft Yarra Strategic Plan. I am excited that the management of the Yarra River is receiving attention and that long-term plans are being discussed. However, outlined below are several issues that I believe require further attention:

- The Plan requires strengthening to move beyond aspirational goals to clear detail on objectives, actions and outcomes. This will allow for robust monitoring as the plan progresses over the 50-year timeframe.
- The Performance Objectives need to be underpinned by SMART goals that reference the environmental indicators in the 'State of the Yarra and its Parklands' report as a baseline to measure the improvement of the action instituted over the next 10 years.
- The SMART goals need to be clearly articulated to ensure accountability and public scrutiny.
- The Performance Objectives and Actions need to be time-bound and cumulative. They also need to clearly and adequately address the impact of climate change and urbanization. This includes the effect of rapid urbanisation expansion and the consequent siltation and stormwater inputs that accompany such development.
- The discussion around the vision regarding clear waters and aspirations to make the Yarra swimmable, seems to imply that the Yarra waters are already in a condition that allow for frequent swimming. Although some people do swim in the Yarra, it is not highly recommended, and an enormous amount of work needs to be done to improve the water quality to a condition where swimming is advisable. I believe this can be done – however the plan needs to clearly articulate targets and actions to achieve this public held vision. Monitoring by EPA is not enough and the warning regarding not swimming for 48 hours after rain shows how easily the river is contaminated by the thousands of stormwater inlets into the river.
- Stormwater must be addressed at both point and non-point sources if the Yarra is to have real improvement. There is robust research that demonstrates just how detrimental

stormwater is to the health of waterways. Strong planning and regulation need to be implemented to ensure that stormwater inputs are dramatically reduced in quantity and that the quality of stormwater entering the Yarra system is greatly improved.

- It is critical that the plan recognizes the conflict between disturbance and habitat fragmentation on the one hand and access to the river on the other. Suitable planning tools need to be included in the plan to clearly define what is to be protected and where activity nodes are appropriate.
- Weed control across the Yarra system needs to be co-ordinated across state and local government bodies to assist with real change. At present this is adhoc and highly dependent on government grants and community good will (i.e. friends group activities).
- The plan should contain plans to increase biodiversity of the river within Melbourne CBD as a way of improving human health and wellbeing and providing increased and improved habitat for native flora and fauna. This will become increasingly important under the influence of climate change and high density living.
- The YSP has been prepared by the Yarra Collaboration Committee (p 4 & p 10 of the Draft Yarra Strategic Plan) and not, as required under the legislation, by the lead agency. The committee has an inherent conflict of interest, and the plan reflects what is currently being done rather than what is intended to be delivered under the Yarra River Protection (Willipgin Birrarung murrn) Act.

Thank you

