



Introducing the Cape to Cape Catchments Group

Inspiring and assisting the community
to protect and enhance the environment of the
Margaret River region



*Cape to Cape
Catchments Group*

'Our Environment - Our Future'

Success in the 2014 Australian Riverprize



CCG is proud to announce that its work on the Margaret River has recently been recognised by a 'highly commended' award in the nation-wide 2014 Australian Riverprize. This prestigious award recognises the excellent work being done across Australia in river and wetland management and protection.

CCG's Riverprize application showcased the work undertaken by many organisations, groups and agencies over the last 12 years to maintain our beautiful Margaret River in the condition it is in today. The group's success is a credit to our community's commitment to protecting this valuable local asset.



Introducing the Cape to Cape Catchments Group

The Cape to Cape Catchments Group (CCG) is an independent not-for-profit organisation. In partnership with the community, we coordinate a range of natural resource management projects across the Margaret River Region of Western Australia extending from Cape Naturaliste to Cape Leeuwin. Our work is vital to the ongoing social, economic and environmental well-being of our region and our community.

Vision

The Margaret River Region is a haven for people and nature.

Motivation

To inspire and assist our community to protect and enhance the special environment that sustains our lifestyles, livelihoods and well-being.

Focus

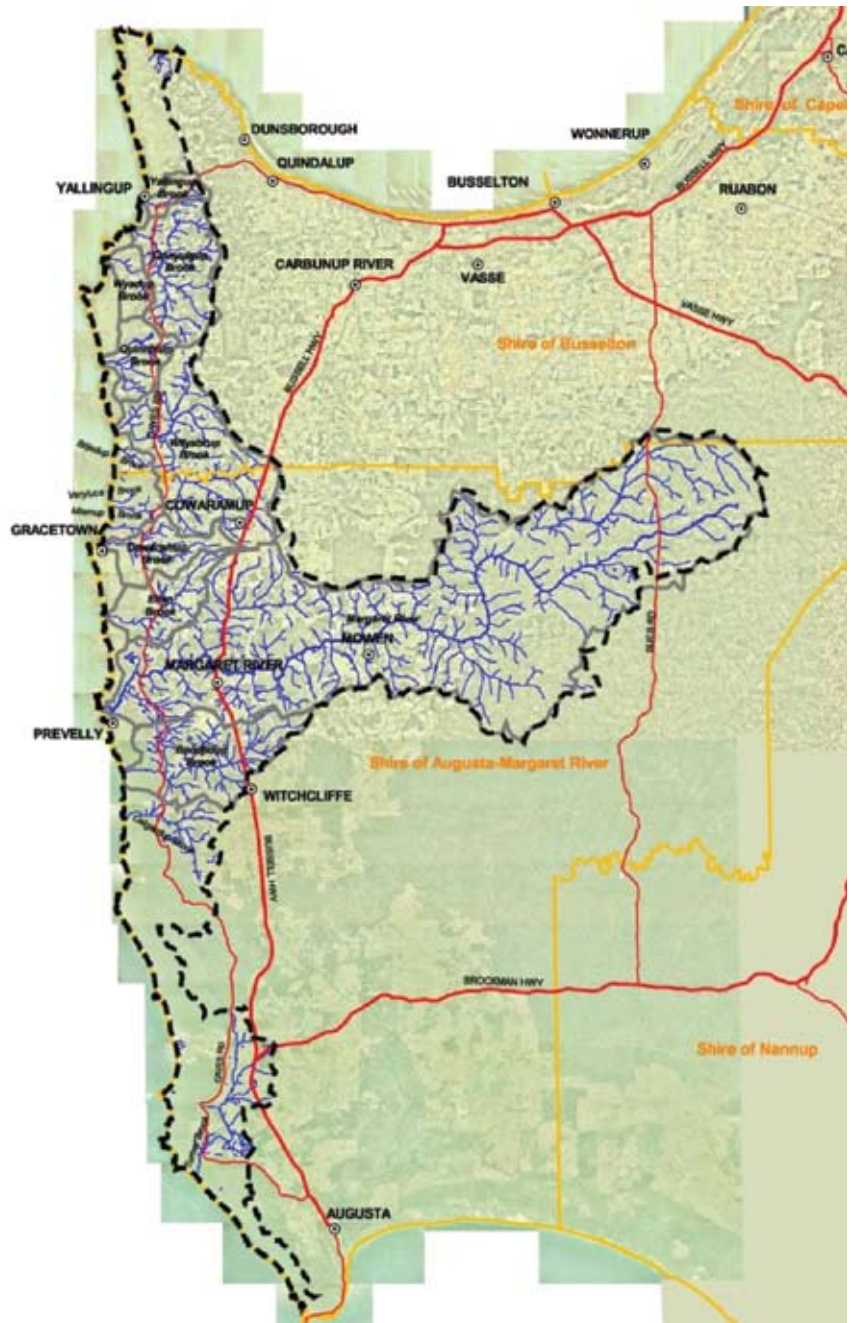
The Cape to Cape Catchments Group (CCG) is one of six sub-regional natural resource management groups operating in the south west of Western Australia. We work in partnership with the South West Catchments Council, Gondwana Link, local and State agencies, industry, community groups, landowners and the community.

Since its inception in November 2002, CCG has undertaken significant work to understand, protect and improve the environment of the Margaret River Region. In collaboration with many stakeholders, the group has coordinated an integrated program of activities including planning, monitoring, research, on-ground action, awareness raising, education and capacity building.

Initially targeting rivers and streams, our focus has expanded progressively outwards to encompass protection of biodiversity values throughout the forests, farmlands, coastline and townships of the region.



Dr Boyd Wykes, Chair



The Margaret River Region

Caring for our Country

CCG recognise the Wardandi people as the traditional inhabitants of the Margaret River Region who have used the land, sea, rivers and flora and fauna for tens of thousands of years.

We aim to involve the Wardandi people at all levels of our work from strategic planning to on ground action and value their participation in community engagement and education programs.

CCG wishes to continue this valuable partnership with traditional inhabitants in Caring for our Country for a sustainable environment for the future.

Values

The Margaret River region is a unique and special place. It contains wildlife refuges, healthy waterways and a wild scenic undeveloped coast. It forms the western end of one of Australia's two internationally recognised biodiversity hotspots – areas of extraordinarily high natural diversity that are under threat.

Our landscape centre-piece, the Margaret River, contains rare and threatened species unique to its catchment and in need of careful protection, while a further 14 streams of individual character cut through the Leeuwin-Naturaliste Ridge to a spectacular coastline.

Our outstanding natural environment is fundamental to the lifestyles enjoyed by our community and sustaining our major livelihoods of wine, food and tourism.

Challenges

As part of the fastest growing region in Western Australia, the area is under ever increasing pressure from a growing population. Fragmentation of the landscape means natural resource management across a variety of tenures provides a challenge.

Our fragile environment faces many challenges that are interconnected including climate change, dieback, marri canker, weeds, feral animals, bushfire and diminishing stream flow. These challenges have the potential to change the region dramatically if they are not addressed.

The Cape to Cape Catchments Group (CCG) is the only community group in the Margaret River region providing a direct link between government agencies, industry, landowners and the wider community and able to tackle these challenges. We provide the scientific and conservation leadership needed to ensure a future for the region.



CCG's People

Members

CCG has an open membership with currently over 275 members including individuals, community groups, landowners, local businesses, local and State government agencies. We keep in touch through our website, Facebook page and regular Streamlines Newsletters which provide updates on events, participation and contribution opportunities and project outcomes.

Supporters

Over the years CCG has received funding and support to work on projects that protect our special region from State and Federal grants programs, the Shire of Augusta Margaret River, City of Busselton, Lotterywest and South West Catchments Council (SWCC). Our community and local businesses are also key supporters, donating money, time and services for schools programs, events and on-ground projects.



Consulting our stakeholders on the future directions for CCG at our 2014 annual community celebration

Staff and Management Committee

CCG's day-to-day activities are delivered by a small group of part-time professional staff. Our governance and project delivery is overseen by a Management Committee of up to eight volunteers who are passionate in achieving CCG's vision of sustaining the Margaret River region as a haven for people and nature.

Commitment

With support from the community, the Shire and our State and Federal Governments, CCG will work to ensure this precious place retains its extraordinary natural and lifestyle attractions in the face of a growing population and changing climate by:

- building powerful alliances of like-minded individuals and groups, and
- playing an active and influential role to make this happen.

Over a Decade of Achievement

The years of work since CCG was formed in 2002 – applying science to natural resource management, building strong partnerships, and pursuing a clear environmental vision – have yielded many accomplishments.

On-ground action

- Excluding stock from 95% of the main channel of the Margaret River and significant revegetation to improve water quality and maintain and enhance riverine ecosystems.
- Coordinated ongoing control of priority environment weeds (blackberry, arum lily and woody weeds) and feral animals in the Margaret River Catchment.

The rock fish-way at Barrett Street Weir allows fish migration in the Margaret River



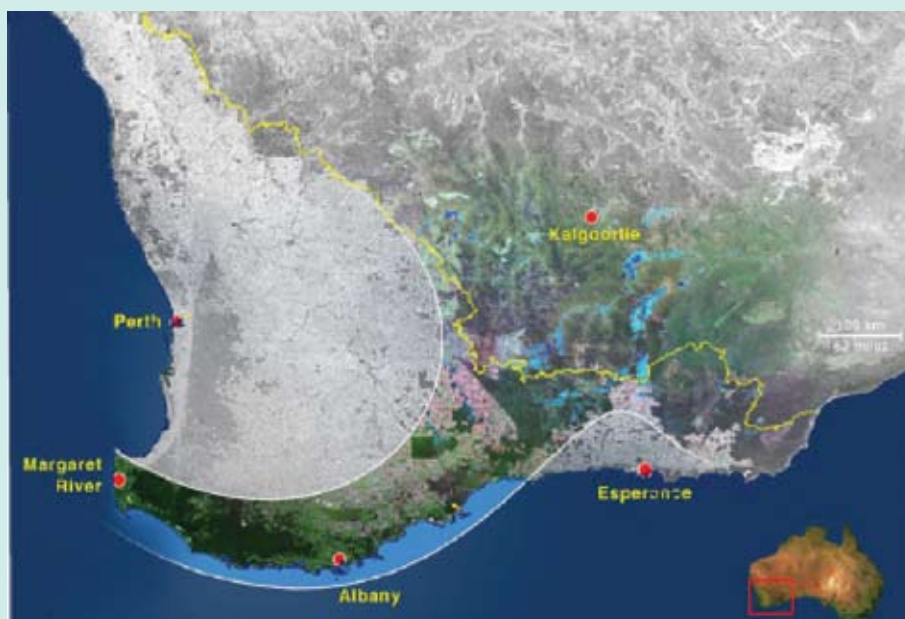
- Restoring fish passage in the Margaret River through the construction of two rock fishways at weirs within the Margaret River townsite.
- Working with dairy farmers in the Margaret River catchment to improve dairy effluent management to protect water quality in the Margaret River.
- Working with the Augusta Margaret River Shire Council to improve stormwater management through the construction of a bio-retention basin within the central town site of Margaret River.
- Surveying and eradication of aquatic feral pests that threaten our unique aquatic fauna.
- Conducting volunteer based 'fish downs' of introduced smooth marron to protect the critically endangered Margaret River Hairy Marron.
- Strategic recovery action by volunteers and contractors after the 2011 Margaret River fires.
- Supporting local groups achieve environmental outcomes through on-ground work undertaken by the Capes Volunteer Team on the coast and the waterways.
- On-ground protection and rehabilitation work including fencing, revegetation and weed control on nine Leeuwin-Naturaliste Ridge streams in accordance with River Action Plans.
- Preparing 20 control plans for identified populations of Weeds of National Significance and controlling priority populations.

Community engagement and education

- Delivering a highly successful schools environmental education program since 2002 including the current Margaret River 'Our Patch' Program that focuses on the natural values and cultural use of the Margaret River environment.
- Providing a weekly opportunity for the community to be actively involved in on-ground environmental activities through the Capes Volunteer Team.
- Producing a large number of information resources on locally relevant environmental issues.
- Increasing awareness and capacity through workshops, field days and seminars.
- Publishing 'Splash in the Margaret River' – a wonderful educational resource.

Planning and research

- Producing a Stream Condition Report (2002) to provide baseline management information.
- Developing River Action Plans (RAPs) for the Margaret River and nine stream systems to improve understanding of stream condition and engaging landowners in on ground action.
- Working with a multidisciplinary team to complete a Conservation Action Plan to guide priorities.
- Developing a Strategic Action Plan for aquatic biodiversity protection in the Capes region in partnership with Murdoch University.
- Working with the Centre of Excellence for Climate Change, Woodland and Forest Health to understand the causes of marri decline in the SW including identifying potential treatment options and communicating research findings to the Margaret River community.
- Participating in the cross-agency Hairy Marron Recovery Team and assisting to implement the draft Hairy Marron Recovery Plan in conjunction with the Department of Fisheries and researchers.
- Conducting the Margaret River Estuary Project to gain a better understanding of the health of the estuary and undertake priority on-ground work in collaboration with traditional owners and groups.
- Undertaking biodiversity assessments for 80 private properties in the Margaret River Agricultural Zone and in nodes adjacent to the Leeuwin Naturaliste National Park to identify biodiversity values, identify action to protect these values and engage landowners in on-ground action.
- Working with our wine industry to provide technical support and training to 85 vineyards and 12 wineries to prepare Environmental Action Plans and achieve Freshcare Environmental Certification.



The western entry to Gondwana Link

CCG is a member of Gondwana Link, working with partners across southern Western Australia to achieve an ambitious ecological vision of reconnecting country from the wet forests of the south west to the woodland and mallee bordering the Nullarbor, with ecosystem function and biodiversity restored and maintained.

Our Sense of Place

Landscape

The Margaret River Region is bounded by the picturesque Leeuwin Naturaliste Ridge with its dramatic coastal geology and special cave ecosystems. The landscape of jarrah, marri and karri forest linked by pockets of trees across paddocks and vineyards is fundamental to our sense of place. The Margaret River and smaller freshwater streams winding through the landscape create corridors of green that support marron and other aquatic life, wildflowers, birds and understorey species. An interlacing of forest, streams and coast shapes the pleasant microclimate of our region, setting us apart from other predominantly cleared landscapes.

Biodiversity

Our place is a wildlife refuge with healthy, biodiverse reserves and a wild scenic, undeveloped coast. The streams contain rare and threatened species unique to the region in need of protection. It is a part of an internationally recognised biodiversity hotspot. Sufficient natural environment has been retained for our ecological systems to remain functional and resilient to the pressures we place on them. It is hard to see the incremental loss which is occurring and complacency is our biggest challenge.

Ancient links

The region is part of an ancient landscape, recognised through our membership of Gondwana Link, a project that unites conservation programs across southern WA. People have long been part of this land, with the Wardandi families of the region linking us to an ancient human heritage of living in balance with our environment.

Lifestyle

The region's natural environment is at the very heart of our community's sense of wellbeing as we move about, play and work in the region. We cherish the region's bush, streams, undeveloped coast and beaches. Walk trails, mountain biking, surfing, swimming, snorkeling and other nature-based activities nourish locals and visitors alike. It is our 'forever place'. CCG's work is about keeping this place beautiful and intact.

Economy

The region's economy focuses on tourism and production of quality wine and foods. Proactive support and protection of the region's environmental values is critical to the future of this economy.

