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The Catchment Management Framework: a system for scientists and practitioners to test and align investment in environmental objectives

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Abstract: Over the past 7 years the Victorian government has invested in the development of the Catchment Management Framework (CMF) for state-wide application. The CMF is designed to test and align the objectives of natural resource scientists and practitioners. The CMF is applied across the whole of Victoria at a 20 m resolution connecting paddock scale land use change to catchment and regional scale environmental impact.

Scientists recognise the need to understand landscape scale processes including biophysical function, landscape connectivity, water quality and flows and the connection between land use and groundwater levels (saline land area).

Natural resource practitioners are faced with the challenge of allocating limited funds to numerous and often competing environmental demands. Practitioners need an evidence based (scientific) system to ensure the allocation of funds generates the greatest environmental benefits.

The CMF contains a number of toolboxes that each deals with an aspect of the environment including: land based biophysical processes, groundwater dynamics, spatial and contextual connectivity and finally and set of tools for systematic spatial and temporal reporting.

This paper provides a discussion of each of the CMF toolboxes and how they are designed to assist both scientists and practitioners in the natural resource investment field.

Keywords: *catchment management, environmental and economic tradeoffs, standardised information needs*

Abstract only