



CORE 4

Rebalance Recover Retain Restore



The CORE 4 principles

Rebalance nutrient applications across the farm.

Recover and reuse nutrients and effluent.

Retain sediment and nutrients on-farm.

Restore the health of local wetlands, waterways and the Gippsland Lakes.



Keeping nutrients and sediment on farm makes good sense. It contributes to productivity, turns run-off back into an asset and helps improve the health of local waterways.

Make the most of farming assets

With highly fluctuating prices for fertilisers, retaining phosphorus on farm and utilising alternative methods for building phosphorus levels has become crucial.

As noted in Table 1, 10,000L of milk produced removes approx 10kg of phosphorus (P) from the property, which is the equivalent to 110kg of superphosphate or 50kg DAP.

The retention of this essential nutrient on farm is a priority for increasing productivity and sustainability on dairy farms.

Benefits to you and your farm

Funding and assistance to keep nutrient and sediment on farm is available through the CORE 4 program. The program will support dairy farmers in the western end of the Gippsland Lakes catchment to make improvements to help retain these assets on farm.

Benefits include:

- Increased nutrient retention on farm
- Potential for increased productivity and/or reduction in costs
- Increased farm efficiency, better draining laneways and feedpads
- Improved asset value of your property
- Improved sustainability
- Contribution to the protection of local waterways.

Benefits for local catchments

With a project area that encompasses over 308 dairy farms, work done as part of the CORE 4 program will help to improve water quality in local waterways.

Minimising nutrient and sediment loss from farms in the western end of the Gippsland Lakes catchment will contribute to the health of the catchment.

There will be direct benefit to the ecological health of water flowing into the Tanjil, Moe, Morwell and Latrobe rivers and, ultimately, to the Gippsland Lakes.

Benefits for the Gippsland Lakes

The Gippsland Lakes system is internationally renowned as a Ramsar-listed wetland. It is the largest navigable inland waterway in the Southern Hemisphere and is a popular fishing, boating and tourist destination.

Recent algal blooms in the Lakes system have had significant economic impacts on water quality and associated local and regional industries such as tourism.

It has been found that excess phosphorus in the water has been the primary cause of this problem.

Consequently, the CORE 4 program has been developed to assist in the reduction of phosphorus sources by providing information regarding the potential production benefits to dairy farmers of retaining more phosphorus and sediment on farm.

Factor	Kg of nutrient removed / 10,000L of milk
N	42
P	10

Table 1 - Nutrient removal by dairying on perennial pasture. (Source: Dairy Australia)

Who will work with you on CORE 4?

John Gallienne is the CORE 4 program mentor and has been engaged by the partnership to work directly with dairy farmers in the delivery of the program. John has a strong history in the management of soils, pasture and nutrients for on farm and environmental gain.

Ag Challenge Consulting provides professional and independent advisory services to agricultural based industries. Ag Challenge will support dairy farmers in identifying phosphorus savings and facilitate the development of CORE 4 action plans.

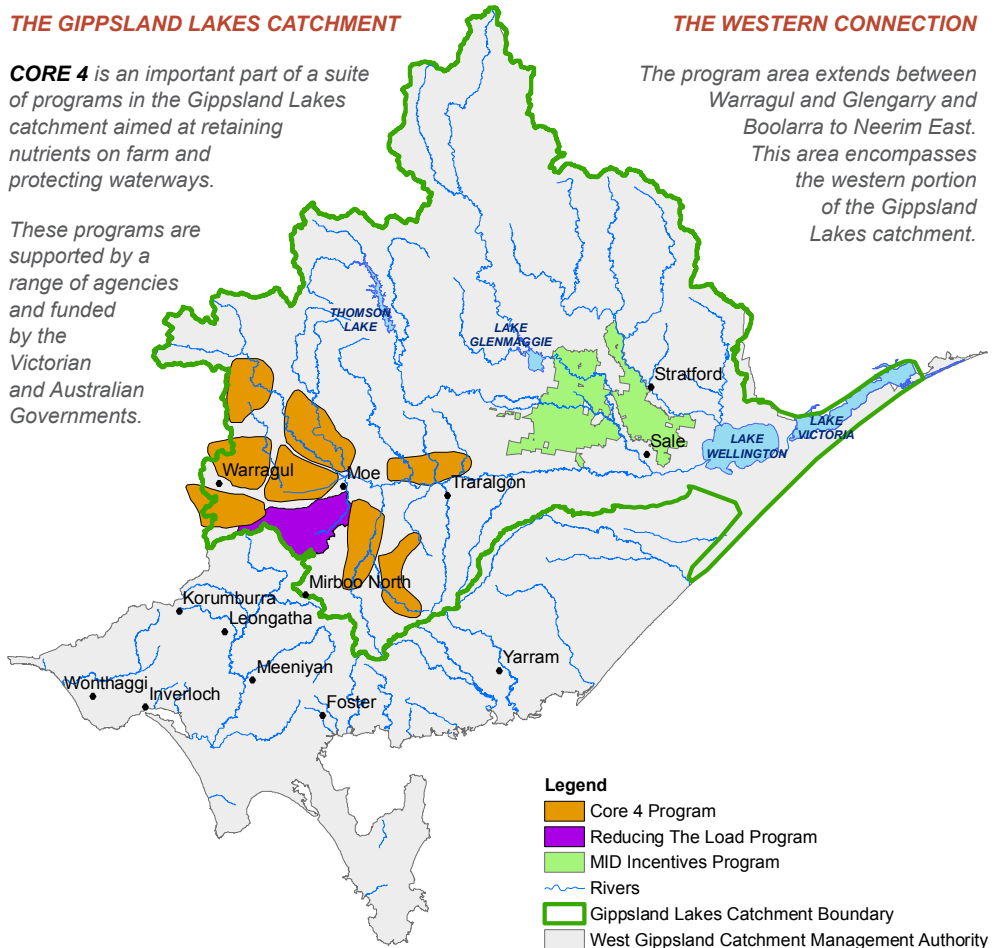
West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority is providing project management support to the program and will deliver the on-ground works associated with on farm improvements.

The program is also supported by industry bodies including GippsDairy, Dairy Australia, Murray Goulburn and Fonterra.

THE GIPPSLAND LAKES CATCHMENT

CORE 4 is an important part of a suite of programs in the Gippsland Lakes catchment aimed at retaining nutrients on farm and protecting waterways.

These programs are supported by a range of agencies and funded by the Victorian and Australian Governments.



THE WESTERN CONNECTION

The program area extends between Warragul and Glengarry and Boolarra to Neerim East. This area encompasses the western portion of the Gippsland Lakes catchment.

How the program works

The program will involve a step by step process to determine the potential savings that each dairy farm may achieve.

This potential saving forms the basis for prioritising which action plans will gain investment, with the highest potential savings invested in first.

Funding decisions will be based on the potential amount by which each action plan may reduce phosphorus exports. The development of an action plan does not guarantee funding.

This prioritisation of action plans will be undertaken by an independent committee and based on a number of decision making tools.

The decision making tools

- **Farm Nutrient Loss Index (FNLI)** – an assessment tool to calculate a farm’s potential risk of nutrient export based on a variety of geographical features. Provides a level of potential risk.
- **DairySAT** – an assessment tool that has a number of key areas relating to nutrient and productivity management. Provides a level of potential risk.
- **P Reduction Calculator** – measures potential phosphorus savings by implementing specific actions on farm aimed at nutrient reduction. Provides a quantitative measure of potential phosphorus savings.

Want to know more?

CORE 4 is funded through the Australian Government’s Caring for Our Country initiative and is part of the Gippsland Lakes Enhancement Program.

It is delivered through a partnership formed by the WGCMA, the Gippsland Lakes and Catchment Taskforce and Dairy Australia.

Expression of interest

To find out more about the program or to register an expression of interest to be involved, contact:

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