

Basin-wide Environmental Watering Strategy

<https://www.mdba.gov.au/managing-water/environmental-water/basin-wide-environmental-watering-strategy>

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For the areas that can be watered – the managed floodplain – and flows in rivers, we expect the additional water available for the environment to improve:

- native vegetation
- waterbirds
- native fish
- river flows and connectivity.

Working together to deliver water at the right times and places to stimulate a desired environmental response is expected to achieve the outcomes summarised below.

Copy of full strategy:

<https://www.mdba.gov.au/sites/default/files/pubs/Basin-wide-e-watering-strategy-Nov14.pdf>

includes Table 1 expected environmental outcomes beyond 2019, Appendix I with interim (pre-2019) and longer term (post-2019) high level targets, and Figure 3 with 3 overall objectives and four categories for targets (above)

See targets listed below:

With the additional water available for environmental watering under the Basin Plan, assisted by the Basin-wide environmental watering strategy, we expect to achieve:

River flows and connectivity

Maintained base flows:

- at about 60% of natural levels

Improved overall flow:

- 10% more into the Barwon-Darling
- 30% more into the River Murray
- 30-40% more to the Murray Mouth (and it open to the sea 90% of the time)

Maintained connectivity in areas where it is relatively unaffected:

- between rivers and floodplains in the Paroo, Moonie, Nebine, Warrego and Ovens

Improved connectivity with bank-full and/or low floodplain flows:

- by 30-60% in the Murray, Murrumbidgee, Goulburn and Condamine-Balonne
- by 10-20% in remaining catchments

Maintain the Lower Lakes above sea level

Vegetation

Maintenance of the current extent of:

- about 360,000 ha of river red gum; 409,000 ha of black box; 310,000 ha of coolibah forest and woodlands; and existing large communities of lignum
- non-woody communities near or in wetlands, streams and on low-lying floodplains

Maintained condition of lowland floodplain forests and woodlands of:

- river red gum
- black box
- coolibah

Improved condition of:

- southern river red gum

Waterbirds

Maintained current species diversity of:

- all current Basin waterbirds
- current migratory shorebirds at the Coorong

Increased abundance:

- 20-25% increase in waterbirds by 2024

Improved breeding:

- up to 50% more breeding events for colonial nesting waterbird species
- a 30-40% increase in nests and broods for other waterbirds

Fish

Improved distribution:

- of key short- and long-lived fish species across the Basin

Improved breeding success for:

- short-lived species (every 1-2 years)
- long-lived species in at least 8/10 years at 80% of key sites
- mulloway in at least 5 out of 10 years

Improved populations of:

- short-lived species (numbers at pre-2007 levels)
- long-lived species (with a spread of age classes represented)
- Murray cod and golden perch (10-15% more mature fish at key sites)

Improved movement:

- more native fish using fish passages

Basin-wide watering strategy at a glance

