

Additional consultation on draft Murray-Darling Basin Plan

The Murray-Darling Basin Authority will hold an additional stage of consultation on the Murray-Darling Basin Plan, before the release of the Proposed Basin Plan later this year.

Given the importance of community feedback, the Chair of the Authority, Mike Taylor, said the Authority would publicly launch a comprehensive *Guide to the Proposed Basin Plan*.

“This will enable people to see all the details of what is being proposed in plain English and to build a good understanding of the issues,” Mr Taylor said.

“In addition, it will give interested parties the opportunity to provide us with feedback ahead of the release of the Proposed Basin Plan later in the year.”

The guide will feature key content of the Proposed Basin Plan including:

- proposed Sustainable Diversion Limits on water use;
- environmental watering requirements;
- the minimum supply of water required to meet critical human water needs;
- water quality and salinity objectives; and
- separate, detailed guides for each of the Basin’s 19 catchments.

“We understand that there’s significant community interest in what the Proposed Basin Plan will put forward,” Mr Taylor said.

“The release of the Guide will provide an additional opportunity for stakeholders, irrigators and Basin communities to find out what the Authority is proposing.

The Authority will release the Guide in early August.

In accordance with the *Water Act 2007*, the Proposed Basin Plan will be followed by a formal, 16-week consultation period. The Authority will then consider all submissions before the Plan is finalised in 2011.

Release of the Guide will help to ensure stakeholders are fully informed before lodging their submissions as part of the formal consultation phase later this year. To assist in this process, the Authority will conduct a series of regional public information sessions across the Basin, where local communities will be able to discuss the guide with senior Authority staff.

Feedback from these information sessions will be taken on board by the Authority in helping to fill any information gaps prior to the release of the Proposed Plan later in the year.

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