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The Queensland 2019–20 annual report to satisfy annual reporting obligations for Basin Plan Schedule 12 responses (except Matter 9 – use of environmental water)

Reporting context

This template provides an information collection point that covers Basin State 2019-20 annual reporting obligations in relation to the Murray-Darling Basin Plan for:

- Basin Plan Schedule 12
- the Basin Plan Implementation Agreement (BPIA) compliance requirements

Note that: reporting for Schedule 12 Matter 9 (the identification and use of environmental water) is reported separately by Basin States, CEWH and the Authority; and reporting for Schedule 12 Matter 5 (the transition to long-term average sustainable diversion limits) is reported separately by the Department.

Matter 6: Local Knowledge & Solutions

Reporting Matter	Reporting Requirement (Supporting evidence to be provided by Basin States)	Response (response/milestone achievement/compliance status)
M6 The extent to which local knowledge and solutions inform the implementation of the Basin Plan. [Chapter 6, 8 & 10]	Please describe the process and outcomes of local engagement contributing to key BP implementation activities in 2019-20 as follows: M6a) Water Resource Plans: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The engagement process and how local knowledge and views influenced the development of WRPs. • Any activities undertaken to increase Traditional Owners' capacity to participate in the development of WRPs, and improve engagement between water planners and Traditional Owners, in order to incorporate indigenous values and uses into WRPs (BP Ch10 Part 9). 	The Warrego-Paroo-Nebine water resource plan was accredited by the Australian Government minister as being consistent with the Basin Plan on 15 June 2017. The Condamine–Balonne and Queensland Border Rivers–Moonie, were completed then formally submitted for accreditation assessment on 28 February 2019. Therefore the engagement processes to seek local knowledge and the views of stakeholders and community (including Traditional Owners) to inform the developments of the WRP's occurred prior to the commencement of this reporting period. The consultation process has been documented in specific consultation reports which summarise how public issues related to WRPs were addressed in finalising these planning instruments. The reports also demonstrate how Queensland has met consultation requirements under the Queensland <i>Water Act 2000</i> and the Commonwealth Murray-Darling Basin Plan 2012.
	M6b) Environmental watering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the engagement process and how local knowledge, views and solutions influenced the planning and delivery of environmental water and the outcomes. This includes how the following were considered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the views of local communities and persons materially affected by the management of environmental water (BP8.39) ○ indigenous values (BP8.35). 	In Queensland, local knowledge and views of stakeholders and community (including indigenous peoples) are sought through the engagement process when developing water plans and supporting documents that set out rules for the management and protection of both planned and held environmental water. In Queensland, the Commonwealth is the only holder of Held Environmental Water (HEW). The majority of the HEW is authorised through unsupplemented (unregulated) entitlements where water is available on an opportunity basis according to flow event rules and entitlement conditions (i.e. not stored in major in-stream infrastructure for later release). The Commonwealth elect to leave the water their entitled to access in-stream to provide environmental benefit as opposed to taking and storing it in off-stream storage. An example of where local knowledge, views and solutions influenced the planning and delivery of environmental water and the outcomes was during the flow event that occurred in the Lower Balonne during February and March 2020. Prior to making water available for waterharvesting, the local knowledge, and views of Lower Balonne Flow Management Reference Group (LBFMRG) were sought in relation to the management of the Environmental, Stock and Domestic (ESD) water that was either stored in Beardmore Dam or flowing into the dam. The LBFMRG's input and advice influenced the planning and delivery of 36 gigalitres (GL) of water for environmental, stock and domestic purposes in terms of rate of release and timing of release. In addition to this the LBFMRG were consulted on a very frequent basis through the duration of the flow event over 30 days regarding the application of the flow event management rules for announced periods of waterharvesting. Flow updates were also provided via email to a broad audience of entitlement holders, stakeholders, agency representatives and community. The following consultation occurred: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 teleconferences pre-flow event and 1 teleconference during flow event - discussing ESD water and applications of flow event rules; • 32 teleconferences during flow event – discussing announced periods for waterharvesting; • 3 information emails pre-flow event and 3 information emails during the flow event - providing ESD water and flow event information. Lower Balonne Water Management Area - February to March 2020 flow event report was published on 28 July 2020, in accordance with the provisions of the water management protocol. Section 3.3 of the report details consultation and engagement with stakeholders during the flow event. The report can be accessed here https://www.business.qld.gov.au/industries/mining-energy-water/water/catchments-planning/water-plan-areas/condamine-balonne . The department also engaged with the Murray-Darling Basin Authority, New South Wales water agencies, the Australian Government and the Commonwealth Environmental Water Office through the Northern Basin Environmental Working Group (NBEWG) which has a focus on the coordination of planning and delivery of environmental water across the northern Murray-Darling Basin. Throughout the event the department provided a range of information to the NBEWG including daily flow event announcements and advice on the progression of events and their management.
	M6c) Other Basin Plan implementation activities, namely Sustainable Diversion Limit (SDL) adjustment:	N/A for Queensland

Reporting Matter	Reporting Requirement (Supporting evidence to be provided by Basin States)	Response (response/milestone achievement/compliance status)
	Describe how local knowledge and solutions identified through engagement with local communities, including Aboriginal communities, impacted on the implementation of other key Basin Plan mechanisms or activities including the development and implementation of SDL adjustment measures. (Reporters may also choose to address any of their other engagement priorities, which may vary among jurisdictions). Examples or case studies are not mandatory, but may be a useful way to describe how local knowledge and solutions inform implementation of the Basin Plan.	

Matter 10: Environmental Watering

Reporting Matter	Reporting Requirement (Supporting evidence to be provided by Basin States)	Response (response/milestone achievement/compliance status)
<p>[Chapter 8, Part 4]</p> <p>M10 The implementation of the environmental management framework (Part 4 of Chapter 8)</p>	<p>M10a) Provide at least one case study that demonstrates how environmental watering principles were embedded in the decision-making process and identify the relevant principles <i>[limit 500 w]</i>.</p> <p>M10b) Please provide reasons for any environmental watering that was not in accordance with the 2019-20 Basin annual watering priorities (partially/fully), in accordance with Section 8.44 of the Basin Plan and Principle 1 of Division 6.</p> <p>M10c) Confirmation that the management and delivery of planned and held environmental water was consistent with the Basin Plan, including the environmental watering plan's <i>Principles to be applied to environmental watering</i>.</p> <p>If confirming, please provide evidence and examples. If unable to confirm, please describe what actions are underway to enable confirmation in the future.</p>	<p>In Queensland there are limited opportunities for storing water for later release and delivery for held unsupplemented (unregulated) environmental water. Nevertheless, environmental "watering" does occur in Queensland, mainly in the form of planned environmental water (PEW) which is protected from consumptive use via water sharing rules, infrastructure operational rules, flow management rules, and water entitlement conditions. This water remains instream during flow events for local and downstream benefits, including water for priority environmental assets and functions, and its provision is in alignment with the environmental watering principles of Chapter 8 of the Basin Plan.</p> <p>One example of the provision of environmental water in Queensland occurred in the first half of this year. Rainfall in the first quarter of 2020 in the Maranoa and Balonne catchments resulted in meaningful flows within these systems and an end to one of the driest periods on record. Inflows to Beardmore Dam triggered an announced period for waterharvesting in the Lower Balonne. Announced periods are made using protocols that ensure adequate flow is entering the system to meet the requirements for environmental flows and commitments to entitlement holders, including the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder (CEWH). This flow event resulted in the provision of PEW via water entitlement conditions (e.g. pumping thresholds) and the triggering of a number of flow event rules, including: the ESD store and release rules, the low flow management rule, and the Narran Lakes support rule. This PEW was further supplemented by entitlements held by the CEWH which were also left instream.</p> <p>Flows resulted in the connectivity of the Lower Balonne distributary system through to and over the New South Wales border, and lateral connectivity of the floodplain in areas. Multiple environmental benefits were achieved (s8.35a) with environmental watering occurring in conjunction with flows regulated for consumptive use (s8.35bii). Waterholes throughout the system were replenished and fish were provided with opportunities to move and breed. Narran Lakes, a priority site listed in the 2019/20 Basin annual environmental watering priorities (s8.33), also received the first decent flows in approximately 7 years, improving vegetation condition in preparation for waterbird breeding. The results of this environmental flow are consistent with the environmental objectives for water-dependent ecosystems as listed in Chapter 8, Part 2 of the Basin Plan (s8.34). Furthermore, environmental water was provided for on a natural flow (8.35e) and therefore mitigates risks associated with the release of cold water from storages without multi-level offtakes (8.36).</p> <p>M10b) Queensland is not aware of any environmental watering that was not in accordance with the 2019-20 Basin annual watering priorities (partially/fully), in accordance with Section 8.44 of the Basin Plan and Principle 1 of Division 6.</p> <p>M10c) Queensland confirms that the management and delivery of planned and held environmental water was consistent with the Basin Plan, including the environmental watering plan's <i>Principles to be applied to environmental watering</i>.</p> <p><i>Evidence and Examples of consistency with the Principles to be applied to environmental watering.</i></p> <p>The Long Term Watering Plans for the Water Plan (Border Rivers and Moonie) 2019, Water Plan (Condamine and Balonne) 2019 and the Warrego, Paroo and Nebine Catchments have been released and each contains a detailed explanation of consistency with the <i>Principles to be applied to environmental watering</i>.</p> <p>See Appendix 3 of the Long Term Watering Plan for the Water Plan (Border Rivers and Moonie) 2019 here https://www.mdba.gov.au/sites/default/files/pubs/qld-long-term-watering-plan-border-rivers-moonie-2019.pdf</p> <p>See Appendix 3 of the Long Term Watering Plan for the Water Plan (Condamine and Balonne) 2019 here https://www.mdba.gov.au/sites/default/files/pubs/qld-long-term-watering-plan-condamine-balonne-2019_0.pdf</p> <p>See Appendix 4 of the Long Term Watering Plan for the Warrego, Paroo and Nebine Catchments here https://www.mdba.gov.au/sites/default/files/pubs/6-DNRM-2016i-Long-term-watering-plan-D16-40882.pdf</p>

Matter 13: Critical Human Water Needs

Reporting Matter	Reporting Requirement (Supporting evidence to be provided by Basin States)	Response (response/milestone achievement/compliance status)
<p>M13 The implementation, where necessary, of the emergency response process for critical human water needs.</p> <p>[Chapter 11] [BPIA 26.1]</p>	<p><i>Context: The Guideline for the triggers and processes for changing water sharing Tiers provides guidance on how the MDBA and Basin States should communicate if the triggers are reached.</i></p> <p>M13a) Please indicate if a water quality trigger (as per s11.05) was reached and if so, what action was taken.</p>	N/A for Queensland
<p>Chapter 11] [BPIA 27.1, 27.2, 28.1]</p>	<p><i>Context: (i) The MDBA will provide New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia with Water Resource Assessments, from which the States make decisions about allocations. Assessments will be provided at least monthly, and more frequently if conditions warrant.</i></p> <p><i>(ii) During periods of Tier 3 water sharing arrangements, the MDBA will provide the Ministerial Council with Water Resource Assessments, from which New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia make decisions about allocations when determining if water can be made available for uses other than critical human water. Assessments will be provided at least monthly, and more frequently if conditions warrant.</i></p> <p><i>(iii) A Basin State must have regard to advice from the Authority regarding the volume of water to be made available to it in a particular year, when making decisions about whether water is made available for uses other than meeting critical human water needs (s11.08(3)).</i></p> <p><i>(iv) The MDBA, through the preparation of the Water Resource Assessment will determine if the appropriate conditions apply. If New South Wales, Victoria or South Australia considers the triggers have been reached, its BOC member should advise the Executive Director, River Management Division, MDBA. The Guideline for triggers and processes for changing water sharing Tiers provides more information on how the MDBA will communicate a change in water sharing arrangements to the Basin States, CEWH and the Department.</i></p> <p>M13b) Please indicate if a trigger was reached and what action was taken to implement water sharing arrangements.</p>	N/A to Queensland

Matter 14: Water Quality and Salinity

Reporting Matter	Reporting Requirement (Supporting evidence to be provided by Basin States)	Response (response/milestone achievement/compliance status)
<p>M14 Progress the implementation of water quality and salinity management plan, including the extent to which regard is had to the targets in Chapter 9 when making flow management decisions.</p> <p>[Chapter 9] [BPIA 21.1]</p>	<p><i>Context: BP Ch9.14 recognises that flow management, in some circumstances, can assist with the management of water quality issues, such as salinity, hypoxic blackwater events and blue green algae outbreaks. The intent of s9.14 is that 'having regard' to these risks and opportunities becomes part of business as usual when making decisions about flow management or the use of environmental water. Other actions that can also address water quality issues include coordination and communication about blue green algae outbreaks (in line with BP s9.18) or hypoxic blackwater events.</i></p> <p>M14a) In this context, please describe how these water quality issues were considered, when making decisions about flow management or the use of environmental water, and/or other actions; did this make a difference to these water quality issues, and are there any learnings to inform adaptive management.</p>	<p>M14a)</p> <p>Water quality issues were considered when developing Queensland water plans. Given the highly unsupplemented (unregulated) nature of flow and the rules based approach to access flow adopted by Queensland there are limited opportunities to influence water quality when making decisions about flow management or the use of environmental water. The only opportunity is through a requirement for resource operations licence holders of water supply schemes (e.g. St George) to minimise adverse impacts on water quality during operation and maintenance activities. There have been no reported incidences to the contrary.</p> <p>While there are limited opportunities to consider water quality issues when making decisions about flow management or the use of environmental water for the above reasons, the following response is provided in relation the targets stated in section 9.14(5):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Queensland has no evidence of not maintaining dissolved oxygen at the target value of at least 50% saturation Queensland has no evidence of not meeting the targets for recreational water quality in section 9.18 of the Basin Plan i.e. that the values for cyanobacteria cell counts or bio volume meet the guideline values set out in the Guideline for Managing Risks in Recreational Water, and Queensland has no evidence the levels of salinity at the relevant sites set out in the Basin Plan should not exceed 830 EC 95% of the time. <p>Queensland will rely on the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder to report on outcomes in relation to environmental watering activities undertaken by the Commonwealth during the February/March 2020 flow events across QMDB catchments</p>

[Chapter 9] [BPIA 23.1]	<p><i>Context: The MDBA, the BOC, and Basin States are to undertake any long-term salinity planning and management functions in accordance with the targets in Appendix 1 of Schedule B of the Murray-Darling Basin Agreement (including the Basin Salinity Management Strategy Operational Protocols).</i></p> <p>M14b) Please indicate how salinity (and other) water quality targets are being applied. (Note that Basin States may refer to Basin Salinity Management 2030 Strategy reporting to meet this reporting requirement, in line with the Schedule 12 Reporting Guidelines).</p>	Queensland refers to Basin Salinity Management 2030 Strategy reporting to meet this reporting requirement, in line with the Schedule 12 Reporting Guidelines.
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Matter 16: Water Trading

Reporting Matter	Reporting Requirement (Supporting evidence to be provided by Basin States)	Response (response/milestone achievement/compliance status)
<p>M16 The implementation of water trading rules.</p> <p>[Chapter 12] [BPIA 29.1 – 31.1]</p>	<p>M16 a) Provide website links to the publication of information regarding an Approval Authority's interest in a trade (s12.38 (2)).</p> <p>M16b) Provide documentation to support compliance with s12.37 (notice of disclosure)</p> <p>M16c) Describe how you have notified affected parties with the decision to restrict a trade and reasons for the restriction consistent with s12.39.</p> <p>M16 d) How has your State undertaken best endeavours to ensure water announcements have been made generally available?</p> <p>M16 e) Provide documentation that supports a compliance with s12.50 (water announcements to be made generally available).</p>	<p>M16</p> <p>a. The Queensland Department of Natural Resources Mines and Energy has not traded any water in the Queensland Murray-Darling Basin (QMDB) in which it has an interest.</p> <p>b. The Queensland Department of Natural Resources Mines and Energy has not traded any water in the QMDB in which it has an interest.</p> <p>c. Queensland has approved trades in 2019-20 with conditions. When a trade is 'restricted' (according to the definition of "restrict" in the Basin Plan), following the decision an information notice (with appeal rights) is issued to the applicant which includes conditions. These conditions are consistent with the relevant accredited water resource plan's environmental and third party water security objectives.</p> <p>d. Queensland best endeavours to ensure water announcements were made available include publishing information on relevant websites</p> <p>e. For unsupplemented entitlements, Queensland publishes all annual announced limits, announced entitlements and announced allocations at https://www.business.qld.gov.au/industry/water/managing-accessing/accessing-water/authorisations/announced-entitlements Queensland publishes notices for limitations on taking water under s29 Queensland <i>Water Act 2000</i> in the Condamine and Balonne Water Plan Area at https://www.business.qld.gov.au/industries/mining-energy-water/water/catchments-planning/water-plan-areas/condamine-balonne Queensland publishes notices for limitations on taking water under s29 Queensland <i>Water Act 2000</i> in the Border Rivers and Moonie Water Plan Areas at https://www.business.qld.gov.au/industries/mining-energy-water/water/catchments-planning/water-plan-areas/border-rivers-moonie For supplemented water allocations, SunWater's announced allocations are published at https://www.sunwater.com.au/schemes/</p>
Information and reporting requirements		
<p>[Chapter 12.43, 12.46] [BPIA 31.1]</p>	<p>M16f) Has the Basin State made any changes to the water access rights displayed on the MDBA's Water Market products page? If so what documentation has been provided to the MDBA with the updated information as required under s12.43?</p> <p>M16g) Has the Basin State implemented any new trade rules that regulate the trade of tradable water access rights? If so have they provided these rules to the MDBA as required under s12.46?</p>	<p>M16f) Queensland has not made any changes to the water access rights displayed on the MDBA's Water Market products page.</p> <p>M16g) Queensland has not implemented any new trade rules that regulate the trade of tradable water access rights.</p>
<p>[Chapter 12] [BPIA 31.2]</p>	<p>M16h) Has the Basin State sold water in the previous year? If so, did they notify the approval or registration authority of the price agreed for the trade?</p>	Queensland has not sold any water in the QMDB in 2019-20.

Matter 19: Water Resource Plan Compliance

Reporting Matter	Reporting Requirement (Supporting evidence to be provided by Basin States)	Response (response/milestone achievement/compliance status)
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M19 Compliance with water resource plans	M19a) The MDBA will provide Matter 19 reporting questions directly to jurisdictions which had accredited WRPs prior to 1 July 2019 through a separate process.	Queensland is the only Basin State which had an accredited Water Resource Plan prior to 1 July 2019. Queensland's report on Matter 19 is provided in a separate template which is provided together with this template.
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Other: SDL Adjustment & Constraints Management

Reporting Matter	Reporting Requirement (Supporting evidence to be provided by Basin States)	Response (response/milestone achievement/compliance status)
[BPIA 14.2]	<p>Ob) Describe progress in the further development of the Ministerial Council agreed package of constraints proposals, and in addressing issues identified in the phased assessment process.</p> <p>Oc) Describe progress towards the successful implementation of constraints measures by 2024, including coordinated cross-jurisdictional activities and community involvement, to enable flow rates of up to 80,000ML per day at the South Australian border.</p>	N/A for Queensland

Other: Water Resource Plans

Reporting Matter	Reporting Requirement (Supporting evidence to be provided by Basin States)	Response (response/milestone achievement/compliance status)
[BPIA 24.1]	<p><i>Context: Progress with the development of Water Resource Plans for accreditation is currently being reported by the MDBA, through quarterly jurisdictional reports</i></p> <p>Od) This reporting is <u>optional</u>. Basin states may choose to comment on their progress where this differs, or is expected to differ, from the most recent MDBA quarterly report on WRP development.</p>	All of Queensland's Water Resource Plans have been accredited.