



# Basin Community Committee

*Bringing a community perspective to the Murray–Darling Basin*

6 June 2019

## COMMUNIQUE

### Basin Community Committee

The Basin Community Committee strongly believe that people are at the heart of the Murray–Darling Basin Plan.

At its meeting via teleconference this week, the Committee agreed there is a need for all Basin governments to work together to restore trust in the Basin Plan.

This can be achieved by listening to the full range of diverse perspectives within basin communities, and by being innovative in how people are engaged or consulted.

The Committee requests Ministers across the Murray–Darling Basin to get on with implementing the Basin Plan urgently, especially after recent elections.

Basin governments need to have strategies in place such as those in the Water Resource Plans, to more effectively respond to extreme events such as the current drought.

The Committee remains concerned that Water Resource Plans may not reflect full connectivity – if end-of-valley flows are not considered, the whole Basin can't function effectively.

The Committee is also calling for consistency across state borders on water sharing – especially river channel capacity and capacity share between NSW and Victoria.

It's critical to review arrangements on how water is used – now and into the future. The Committee is also calling for state consistency on all natural resource management issues that impact water quality and security, such as feral animals.

Communities are concerned about the channel capacity limitations and the potential impacts on the growing horticultural boom downstream of the Barmah Choke.

The Committee notes the dramatic change in the use of water including the huge growth in permanent plantings, and are concerned there isn't a holistic plan for agricultural development across the Basin.

**The Basin Community Committee is an independent advisory committee to the Murray–Darling Basin Authority and the Murray–Darling Basin Ministerial Council. Established under the Water Act 2007, the Committee ensures the voices of diverse communities in the Basin are heard.**

**For more information on the Basin Community Committee**

 [www.mdba.gov.au/BCC](http://www.mdba.gov.au/BCC)  1800 630 114



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There is an increasing sense of urgency amongst all communities for faster action on all 36 Sustainable Diversion Limit Adjustment Mechanism projects, including the constraints projects.

Communities are extremely nervous about the risks of these projects failing – while states may be working towards the rollout of the 605 GL Sustainable Diversion Limit projects, communities can't see any activity and therefore are increasingly anxious.

Many Committee members also support the call for the ACCC to review water markets trading.

Concern was also expressed that no real progress is visible on the toolkit measures in the northern Basin.

In the Lower Balonne, there is intense frustration in the community that the recent flow event in the Maranoa was very poorly handled and a significant missed opportunity to extend the flow to those desperate for water for their stock, as well as to the environment for fish and wildlife.

### **BACKGROUND**

Members of the Committee were appointed by the Authority after an extensive selection process involving all Basin governments. They reflect the diverse perspectives of towns and communities across the Basin, as well as the diversity of experiences around water reform.

Contact your local Basin Community Committee member via [enagement@mdba.gov.au](mailto:enagement@mdba.gov.au) to share your views on how the Basin Plan is being implemented.

*For more detail about the Basin Community Committee, visit [mdba.gov.au/BCC](http://mdba.gov.au/BCC)*

*Members include: Rory Treweeke - Chair (Lower Balonne), Phil Duncan (Gwydir), Amy Fay (Goulburn-Murray), Karen Hutchinson (Murrumbidgee), Emily Jenke (Lower Lakes), Howard Jones (Lower Darling), Susan Madden - Authority member (Dubbo), Neil Martinson (Riverland), Katrina Myers (Mid-Murray), Samantha O'Toole (Lower Balonne), Sandra Peckham (Bogan), Jo Pfeiffer (Lower Lakes), Sue Rudd (Sunraysia), David Thurley (Upper Murray), Adrian Weston (Goulburn-Broken).*

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