

Information collection template for water year 2015-16

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The Queensland 2015–16 annual report to satisfy reporting obligations for:

- Basin Plan Schedule 12 responses
- Basin Plan Implementation Agreement self-assessment of compliance with implementation tasks

Reporting context

This template provides for one Commonwealth information collection point, which can be used multiple times to meet Basin State reporting obligations in relation to the Murray-Darling Basin Plan.

Our aim is to reduce duplication, improve transparency and increase efficiency of reporting. The template has been tailored to address information requirements for the 2015-16 reporting year and will be updated for each subsequent reporting period.

At this point in time, the information collection template is designed to satisfy reporting obligations for Basin Plan Schedule 12 and Basin Plan Implementation Agreement (BPIA) compliance requirements on Implementing Water Reform in the Murray-Darling Basin. Reporting for Schedule 12 Matter 9 (the identification and use of environmental water) is reported elsewhere. Matter 9, indicators 9.1 and 9.2, are reported through existing Water Act s71 and s32 reporting requirements and Matter 9, indicator 9.3, is reported through the *Matter 9.3 reporting template*.

A. Local Knowledge and Stakeholder Engagement

Reporting Matter	Supporting evidence to be provided by Queensland	Response (response/milestone achievement/compliance status)
<i>The extent to which local knowledge and solutions inform the implementation of the Basin Plan</i>		
<p>A1 The outcome of engagement on the implementation of the Basin Plan</p> <p><i>Applicable to Schedule 12, Matter 6, and Indicator 6.1</i></p>	<p>Descriptive statement. Where possible include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How local knowledge and solutions were used by the reporter • How involving communities made a difference to Basin Plan implementation • How decisions changed as a result of community involvement • How environmental watering in regulated catchments has occurred having regard to the views of local communities and persons materially affected by the management of environmental water • Local knowledge might include knowledge drawn from Traditional Owners and other Aboriginal people and groups • When reporting on Aboriginal participation and influence, processes of involvement may be as important as outcomes. <p>In 2015/16 reporting, we would expect use of local knowledge to feature in development of Water Resource Plans and the management of environmental water.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>See Attachment One: Case Study - <i>Community engagement influences plan outcomes.</i></p>
<p>A2 Processes used to identify stakeholders and other relevant groups and individuals from local communities and peak bodies</p> <p><i>Applicable to Schedule 12, Matter 6 and Indicator 6.2</i></p>	<p>Descriptive statement. Where possible include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process used to identify stakeholders and other relevant groups and individuals 	<p>Queensland engages with catchment based stakeholder groups, peak bodies and the Commonwealth Environmental Water Office about both surface and ground water planning and management. These are the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower Balonne Water Network, • Lower Balonne Working Group • Border Rivers Food and Fibre, (including associated committees eg Dumaresq Valley Irrigators Association, Upper Weir Water Users Assoc, Lower Weir Water Users Assoc, Macintyre Brook Water Users Assoc, Mungindi Cotton Growers and Water Users Assoc), • Border Rivers Environmental Water Network, • Gowrie Oakey Creek Irrigators Association • Central Downs Irrigators Limited (Central Condamine Alluvium) • Oakey Groundwater Management Area Committee • Dalrymple Groundwater Management Area Committee (Warwick/Allora) • Upper Hodgson Creek Groundwater Management Area Committee (Toowoomba) • Border Rivers Groundwater Management Area Committee • Water Engagement Forum (peak bodies forum including WWF and Queensland Conservation

Reporting Matter	Supporting evidence to be provided by Queensland	Response (response/milestone achievement/compliance status)
		<p>Council).</p> <p>Queensland organises briefings with Local Governments to update them on water planning issues in their area. For example meetings were held with Paroo and Murweh Shire Councils during the finalisation of the Warrego Paroo Bulloo Nebine Water Resource Plan.</p> <p>The Northern Basin Aboriginal Nations (NBAN) has been formed with representatives from 22 Aboriginal Nations and is the key Aboriginal stakeholder body for the Queensland Murray Darling Basin catchments. Queensland attended all meetings of NBAN to which it was invited in 2015-16.</p> <p>The Northern Basin Advisory Committee (NBAC) is an active and comprehensive key stakeholder reference forum for engaging on matters associated with implementation of the Basin Plan and water recovery activities. Queensland attends all NBAC meetings.</p> <p>Queensland also engages directly with landholders on water recovery through infrastructure upgrades. The Healthy HeadWaters water use efficiency project (HHWUE) is delivered by Queensland with funding from the Australian Government's Sustainable Rural Water Use and Infrastructure Program, as part of the implementation of the Murray–Darling Basin Plan in Queensland. The project funds irrigators to upgrade on-farm irrigation infrastructure. Approved applicants must make a 10 per cent contribution to the project cost, and transfer at least 50 per cent of the water savings (by permanent transfer of water allocation) to the Australian Government for environmental use. The 10 per cent contribution may be made by cash/in-kind contributions, and/or by offering additional water for transfer. The HHWUE team engaged with the community at 20 events and meetings in 2015-16.</p>
<p>A3 How stakeholders and other relevant groups and individuals were engaged</p> <p><i>Applicable to Schedule 12, Matter 6 and Indicator 6.3</i></p>	<p>Descriptive statement. Where possible include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Range of audiences engaged • Range of opportunities (types of engagement) <p>Relate these to the Basin Plan obligations to have regard to local views (Chapter 8 and 10)</p>	<p>Queensland employs a mix of targeted meetings and public community consultation processes.</p> <p>1) Joint consultation meetings with Commonwealth.</p> <p>Queensland has participated in community engagement processes led by the Authority, which included representatives from the Department of the Environment and Commonwealth Environmental Water Office, during 2015-16. Meetings were held in Dirranbandi, St George, Texas, Toowoomba and Goondiwindi. Issues covered included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • water recovery – buyback and Healthy Headwaters Water Use Efficiency Program, • Northern Basin review, • Northern Basin environmental science projects and socio–economic studies related to the Northern Basin review, • the in-catchment reduction in diversions for the Lower Balonne and the shared reduction for the Barwon Darling. <p>Queensland has supported Department of the Environment meetings regarding groundwater recovery from the Condamine Alluvium.</p> <p>Queensland has facilitated engagement with the Lower Balonne community and Commonwealth Environmental Water Office about temporary trade options to achieve environmental benefits.</p> <p>2) Other groups</p> <p>Queensland has attended stakeholder meetings throughout the year with groups listed in A2 and assisted in discussion of Basin Plan matters as they affect those particular stakeholders.</p>

Reporting Matter	Supporting evidence to be provided by Queensland	Response (response/milestone achievement/compliance status)
		<p>Addressing sections and 10.07,10.26 (2)(b), and 10.52,10.53 and 10.54 of the Basin Plan</p> <p>In developing the Queensland Water Resource Plan (WRP) and Resource Operations Plan (ROP) for the Warrego Paroo Bulloo and Nebine catchments, the Queensland Government undertook extensive consultation with stakeholders including water users, traditional owners, water infrastructure operators, sectoral interest groups and other jurisdictions [s10,07, 10.26(2)(b)]. The details of this consultation are described in the Water Resource Plan and Amended Resource Operations Plan Consultation Report (DNRM, 2016). https://www.dnrm.qld.gov.au/water/catchments-planning/catchments/warrego-paroo-bulloo-nebine</p> <p>Queensland has also actively engaged with Aboriginal Nations in the Warrego, Paroo, Bulloo and Nebine catchments during 2015-16 with six meetings on country and two meetings in major towns outside of the catchment for Aboriginal people from the catchments who don't live on country.[s10.53]. During the consultation Aboriginal values and uses of water were identified and from these objectives and outcomes for management of water resources were developed [s10.52, 10.53 and 10.54]</p> <p>In April 2016 Queensland formed a working group for Aboriginal consultation with the Northern Basin Aboriginal Nations (NBAN) being the key stakeholder representing Aboriginal people in the Northern Basin. Consultation on Water Resource Plans for the remaining Queensland Murray Darling Basin catchments are being planned and undertaken in cooperation with the working group.</p> <p>As an action from the working group in June 2016 Queensland conducted a 2 day workshop of the 14 nations representing the Condamine Balonne, Moonie and Border at Boggabilla. The purpose of this workshop was to discuss future engagement of Aboriginal nations to identify who, where and when to commence further engagement on values and uses, outcomes and objectives of Aboriginal people.</p> <p>Addressing sections 8.19(4), 8.19(6), 8.20(1) and 8.55 of the Basin Plan</p> <p>In addition to the consultation undertaken as part of the review of the Warrego Paroo Bulloo and Nebine Queensland WRP and ROP, the Queensland Government engaged in targeted meetings and workshops with the following key stakeholders in the formation of the Long Term Watering Plan (LTWP) for the Warrego Paroo and Nebine catchments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Queensland—NSW Intersecting Stream Working Group [s8.20(1)(b)] • NSW Government agencies including Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH), Office of Water and NSW Fisheries [s8.20(1)(a,b,e)] • Commonwealth Environmental Water Office (CEWO) [s8.20(1)(a)] • Murray-Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) • SunWater, the operator of bulk water supply infrastructure [s8.20(1)(c)]. <p>In the context of framing the 2016–2017 annual environmental watering priorities, the Queensland government has consulted directly with the Commonwealth Environmental Water Office (CEWO), New South Wales government and SunWater—the operator of bulk water supply infrastructure, on</p>

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		<p>proposed environmental watering priorities and possible cooperative arrangements. The CEWO's annual options planning process for 2016–2017 in relation to environmental water holdings in Queensland have been considered in the development of Queensland's Annual Environmental Watering Priorities document.</p> <p>Consultation also occurred with the Border Rivers Water Network and Border Rivers Food and Fibre in relation to the developing arrangements on the Border. For the Condamine and Balonne, engagement has occurred with key interests from the Lower Balonne Water Network. [s8.55]</p>

B. Environmental Watering

Reporting Matter	Supporting evidence to be provided by Queensland	Response (milestone achievement/compliance status)
<i>The implementation of the environmental management framework (Part 4 of Chapter 8)</i>		
<p>B1 Long-term watering plans were prepared, with the required content, published, reviewed and updated as obligated under Part 4 of Chapter 8, Divisions 3.</p> <p><i>Applicable to Schedule 12, Matter 10, Indicator 10.1 and BPIA 18.1</i></p>	<p>Each Basin State will prepare long-term watering plans aligning with the Plan's surface water resource plan areas.</p> <p>The level of detail in a long-term watering plan will vary according to local conditions, levels of development and regulation, the influence on other water resources, and statutory and other arrangements prevailing in the surface water resource plan area.</p> <p>A long-term watering plan may provide that an existing or other specified instrument or text comprises or is part of a Basin State's plan.</p> <p>The plans will be developed by dates agreed between the Murray Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) and each Basin State.</p> <p>The MDBA and each Basin State will separately agree on what further material would be required for each of the State's long-term watering plans. As part of this, the MDBA and each Basin State will also agree on the standards required for this material.</p>	<p>A Long Term Watering Plan was prepared for the Warrego Paroo Nebine Water Resource Plan Areas. It was submitted to MDBA on 18th February 2016.</p> <p>Other Long Term Watering Plans will be developed between July 2016 and January 2019 for submission for accreditation by June 2019 as part of the Water Resource Plan package for each remaining catchment.</p>
<p>B2 Annual priorities were prepared, with the required content, published, reviewed and updated as obligated under Part 4 of Chapter 8, Divisions 4</p> <p><i>Applicable to Schedule 12, Matter 10, Indicator 10.1 and BPIA 19.1</i></p>	<p>The level of detail for annual environmental watering priorities will vary according to local conditions, levels of development and regulation, influence on other water resources and statutory and other arrangements in the water resource plan area.</p> <p>The principle of fit for purpose management will inform the development and assessment of annual environmental</p>	<p>The Annual Environmental Watering Priorities 2016-17 for the Queensland Murray Darling Basin catchments were submitted to the MDBA on 31 May 2016.</p>

	<p>watering priorities by Basin States and the Murray Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) respectively.</p> <p>Basin States will submit their annual environmental watering priorities or other relevant instrument as agreed with the MDBA, for the purposes of identifying the Basin annual environmental watering priorities for the water resource plan areas.</p>	
<p>B3 Watering strategies, plans and priorities are prepared consistently with Part 4 of Chapter 8, in relation to coordinating, consulting and cooperating with other Reporters and the matters to which regard must be had (Chapter 8, Part 4)</p> <p><i>Applicable to Schedule 12, Matter 10, Indicator 10.2 and BPIA 20.1</i></p>	<p>a. Describe how coordination, consultation and cooperation occurred including with other governments in preparing watering strategies, plans and priorities, as obligated in Part 4 of Chapter 8, as well as the matters to which regard must be had</p> <p>b. Describe how coordination, consultation and cooperation made a difference</p>	<p>a. Queensland Government engaged in targeted meetings and workshops with the following key stakeholders in the formation of the Long Term Watering Plan (LTWP) for the Warrego Paroo Nebine catchments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Queensland—NSW Intersecting Stream Working Group • NSW Government agencies including Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH), Office of Water and NSW • Commonwealth Environmental Water Office (CEWO) • Murray-Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) • SunWater, the operator of bulk water supply infrastructure <p>Meetings held with the CEWO focussed on Queensland’s approach to the Long Term Watering Plan in unregulated catchments such as the Warrego Paroo Nebine. The CEWO provided comments in relation to environmental watering on the draft Queensland Water Resource Plan and Resource Operation Plan, which were taken into consideration in the development of the LTWP. The CEWO currently manages its environmental water entitlement in the Warrego River by keeping it instream, thereby contributing to the environmental watering outcomes in this system.</p> <p>Co-operative arrangements have been established in the Warrego Paroo Nebine catchments. The Intergovernmental Agreement for the Paroo River (2003) includes an intersecting streams working group comprising New South Wales and Queensland government agencies that provides advice and recommendations on policy and management issues relevant to the Paroo and other Intersecting Streams systems.</p> <p>Other examples where cooperative cross-border participatory processes have occurred in Queensland Murray Darling Basin catchments include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of the New South Wales and Queensland Border Rivers Intergovernmental Agreement 2008. This agreement can be accessed on the Department of Natural Resources and Mines website at www.dnrm.qld.gov.au/water/catchments-planning/catchments/border-rivers. • The development of low and medium flow water sharing rules for the Lower Balonne • The development of flow sharing arrangements for the Lower Warrego. <p>b. Queensland does not hold any Held Environmental Water. The Planned Environmental Water is managed according to rules in statutory plans which were developed by a consultative planning process. Queensland provides expert advice to intergovernmental forums whenever necessary but it is not possible to detail what effect this has had on watering decisions made by other jurisdictions.</p>
<p>B4 How Environmental watering principles were applied consistent with Chapter 8, Part 4, Division 6.</p>	<p>a. Provide at least one case study that demonstrates how environmental watering principles were applied and identify the relevant principles.</p>	<p>See Attachment 2 - Case Study <i>The application of environmental watering principles in Queensland</i></p>

<p><i>Applicable to Schedule 12, Matter 10, Indicator 10.3 and BPIA 20.2</i></p>	<p>b. Provide reasons for any environmental watering that was not in accordance with annual watering priorities (please provide answer in the <i>statement of reasons</i> table at bottom of this document).</p> <p>c. Where feasible and agreed by the relevant basin state, provide confirmation that measures have been implemented to facilitate the use of environmental water through water shepherding and return flow provisions.</p>	<p>b. The <i>Statement of Reasons</i> table is not required as there were no instances where the Basin Annual Environmental Watering Priorities for 2015-16 were not followed.</p> <p>c. Queensland has not yet agreed to implement measures to shepherd water. However Queensland has agreed to review the water sharing rules in the Condamine-Balonne Water Resource Plan to maximise the protection of environmental flows through the Lower Balonne. The review will be undertaken in consultation with Lower Balonne water users, including the CEWO, with the objective of making as much of the water recovered above Beardmore Dam as possible available to contribute to environmental outcomes downstream in the Narran Lakes and Culgoa floodplain.</p>
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C. Water Quality and Salinity Management

Reporting Matter	Supporting evidence to be provided by Queensland	Response (milestone achievement/compliance status)
Implementation of the 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>C1 Regard had to the targets in s9.14 when managing water flows</p> <p><i>Applicable to Schedule 12, Matter 14, Indicator 14.1 and BPIA 21.1</i></p>	<p>Summary of how Queensland 'had regard' to water quality targets when managing water flows. Statement that procedures and tools were in place, and how these were used in the reporting year. Reporters to provide a case study where possible.</p>	<p>Due to the unregulated nature of the majority of rivers in the Queensland Murray Darling Basin (QMDB) active management of unsupplemented flows is not possible. However there are some medium sized storages within the QMDB that supply irrigation water such as Leslie Dam, Beardmore Dam, Coolmunda Dam and Glenlyon Dam. The relevant targets in s 9.14(5) of the Basin Plan are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To maintain dissolved oxygen at the target value of at least 50% saturation b) The targets for recreational water quality ie that the values for cyanobacteria cell counts or biovolume meet the guideline values set out in the Guideline for Managing Risks in Recreational Water, and c) The levels of salinity at the Darling River downstream of Menindee Lakes should not exceed 830 EC 95% of the time. <p>Queensland has no evidence that releases from any of these storages have the potential to contribute to a decrease of dissolved oxygen saturation to below 50% thus causing a blackwater event. Also Queensland has no evidence that releases from any of these storages have the potential to raise the values for cyanobacteria cell counts or biovolumes above the relevant guideline values. If cyanobacteria are present in storages, the mixing of water that happens when releases are made produces unfavourable conditions for cyanobacteria downstream of the release point. Similarly Queensland has no evidence that releases from any of these storages have the potential to alter the levels of salinity downstream of Menindee Lakes.</p>
<p>C2 Regard had to the targets in s9.14 when making decisions about the use of environmental water</p> <p><i>Applicable to Schedule 12, Matter 14, Indicator 14.2 and BPIA 21.1</i></p>	<p>Summary of how Queensland 'had regard' when making decisions about the use of environmental water. Statement that procedures and tools were in place, and how these were used in the reporting year. Reporters to provide a case study where possible.</p>	<p>Due to the unregulated nature of the majority of rivers in the Queensland Murray Darling Basin (QMDB) active management of unsupplemented environmental water is not possible. This environmental water (both planned and held) is not taken and left in the river, thus contributing to natural flows.</p> <p>Environmental Stock and Domestic releases are made from Beardmore Dam, but as described in C1 above there is no evidence that those releases have any effect on the targets in s9.14(5).</p>
Application of salinity targets for the purposes of long-term salinity planning and management (Refers compliance status with section s9.19 of the Basin Plan).		
<p>C3 Apply salinity targets in the Murray–Darling Basin Agreement for salinity planning and management.</p> <p><i>Applicable to Schedule 12, Matter 14 and BPIA 23.1</i></p>	<p>The Murray Darling Basin Authority, the Basin Officials Committee, 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).</p>	<p>Queensland refers to Basin Salinity Management 2030 Strategy Annual Report for 2015-16 to meet this reporting requirement. In the spirit of not duplicating reporting effort please refer directly to that report.</p>

Water quality and salinity trigger points

C4 Determine whether the trigger is reached.

Applicable to BPIA 26.1

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.

Not relevant to Queensland.

D. Water Trading

Reporting Matter	Supporting evidence to be provided by Queensland	Response (milestone achievement/compliance status)
<i>The implementation of water trading rules - Approval processes for trade of water access rights</i>		
<p>D1 Disclose interests, give reasons if restricting trade, provide notice, and publish on website.</p> <p><i>Applicable to Schedule 12, Matter 16, Indicator 16.1 and BPIA 30.1</i></p>	<p>An approval authority must disclose to each party to a proposed trade any legal or commercial interest it, or a related party, has in the water access right to be traded and any commercial interest it has in the activities of any water market intermediary involved in the trade before the trade occurs, as soon as practicable.</p> <p>If an approval authority has approved a trade to which it was a party, it must publish that fact including details of the type of water access right. If an approval authority rejects a proposed trade, it must notify the relevant parties in writing of its reasons.</p> <p>An approval authority who has restricted a trade of a water access right for any reason must give notice of the decision and the reasons for the decision as soon as is practicable but in any case within 30 days after the decision to restrict the trade.</p>	<p>Queensland Government has not traded any water in which it or a related party has a legal or commercial interest.</p> <p>Queensland Government has not restricted any trade of a water access right.</p>
<p>D2 Trade processing times</p> <p><i>Applicable to Schedule 12, Matter 16, Indicator 16.2 and BPIA 29.1-31.1</i></p>	<p>Report on interstate and intrastate trade processing times (as per the Council of Australian Governments service and reporting standards for trade processing times).</p> <p>Confirmation that applications for entitlement and allocation trades to which the Commonwealth was a party were processed consistent with the agreed service standards.</p>	<p>The performance against Council of Australian Governments service standards for processing temporary and permanent water trades is found on the Department of Natural Resources and Mines' (DNRM) website:</p> <p>https://www.business.qld.gov.au/industry/water/managing-accessing/markets-trading/service-standards</p> <p>Queensland has processed applications for water entitlement and allocation trades to which the Commonwealth was a party consistent with the agreed service standards for trade processing times for state approval agencies.</p>
<i>Restrictions on trade and their application (Refers compliance status with sections s12.02-12.27 of the Basin Plan).</i>		
<p>D3 Ensure trades are consistent with the water trading rules</p> <p><i>Applicable to Schedule 12, Matter 16 and BPIA 29.1</i></p>	<p>a. Basin States will review and exercise their best endeavours to ensure that any necessary amendments are made to their water trading rules to ensure they are consistent with the Plan water trading rules by 1 July 2014 or in accordance with the expiry of transitional or interim water resource plans.</p> <p>In addition, surface water trade within a regulated system, between regulated systems or within an</p>	<p>a. The remaining issues of concern identified by the Murray Darling Basin Authority and how Queensland proposes to address them are as follows:</p> <p>1) Interstate trade in areas of low water use — Queensland to monitor the demand and only establish an interstate market if or when required</p> <p>For 2015-16, Queensland reports that there were no enquiries/demand for interstate trade in the intersecting streams but will continue to monitor the level of demand in this area. Further consideration of this issue will occur if water users indicate to the Department of Natural Resources and Mines (DNRM) and the New South Wales Government that they wish to purchase water and that the only water available for purchase is across the state boundary.</p>

	<p>unregulated system must be free of any restriction on changing the location at which water can be taken, and not be subject to any volumetric limit, except for defined allowable restrictions.</p> <p>b. The Basin States are required to notify the MDBA of all restrictions on the trade of surface water and the reasons for the decision within 30 days of commencement of the rules or no later than the date of effect of the restriction.</p>	<p>Any resultant action following an assessment of the efficacy of introducing interstate trade will be proportionate to the level of demand, the resources available, expected costs, anticipated water market benefits, and the outcomes of collaboration with the New South Wales government. In such a case, DNRM has outlined a process to establish an interstate market.</p> <p>2) Conjunctive storage arrangements — no action required Queensland has provided clarifying information to the MDBA on the current conversion process for water harvesting entitlement in the Lower-Balonne. Under the conversion process there is no change to any associated water delivery right, works approval or water use approval. The current conversion process does not involve a separate location-related right, only that it changes the method of monitoring and limiting water extractions. Therefore DNRM considers that there is no inconsistency with the Basin Plan trade rules to address.</p> <p>3) Relocatable groundwater licences — assessment to prioritise the conversion to tradeable water allocations Queensland acknowledges that the long-term aim is towards converting relocatable licences to water allocations. However this process may take at least three years to complete in any single area, depending on the number of licences and availability of information. As DNRM's current priority is the review and replacement of the state plans (WRPs and ROPs) in the Queensland Murray-Darling Basin, DNRM has advised MDBA that its current focus until 2019 is on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> introducing water trading in areas where it is not available and there is a demonstrated demand; and assessing relocatable licences to determine their suitability and priority for conversion to tradeable water access entitlements. <p>b. The Warrego-Paroo-Bulloo-Nebine Resource Operations Plan (ROP) was reviewed and the amended plan commenced in May 2016. It forms part of the proposed Water Resource Plan package for the Warrego-Paroo-Nebine (currently being assessed for accreditation by the MDBA). In the ROP, section 36 Seasonal water assignment rules includes a visible pass flow requirement to water access entitlements being temporary traded to waterholes. This rule provides increased protection for environmental water in refugial waterholes and maintains fairness and equity across all dealings of the same nature. While MDBA supports the environmental benefits of this rule, it advises that the rule is constructed in such a way that may be inconsistent with the Chapter 12 Basin Plan provisions about the right to free trade. While DNRM acknowledges it may have inadvertently introduced this inconsistency, it advises that there is no history of such a seasonal assignment occurring on unregulated rivers in the plan area. It is therefore considered very unlikely that there will be a demand for this type of trade in the foreseeable future. The pathway to resolve this issue is in the context of this low risk:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DNRM will report each year on whether there has been any demand or activation of this rule. DNRM will develop an alternative trade rule that is consistent with the Basin Plan as part of the review of the remaining Queensland Murray-Darling Basin plans. This process includes stakeholder consultation and is expected to be completed by 2019. The Warrego-Paroo-Bulloo-Nebine ROP will be amended based on the above new rule so it is consistent with the Basin Plan, but at a time chosen by DNRM to be suitable and cost effective. <p>For the 2015-16 year, DNRM reports that there was no demand for or activation of the trade rule in section 36 of the ROP.</p>
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Information and reporting requirements		
<p>D4 Provide information on water access rights and water trade rules.</p>	<p>A Basin State will provide the MDBA with certain information about water access rights conferred under Basin State law. If the information is changed, the Basin State will give the changed information to the MDBA as soon as is practicable, but in any case, no later than the date of effect of the change.</p> <p>A Basin State will provide a copy of the rules regulating the trade of tradeable water rights to the MDBA. If the rules include material by way of a reference to another document the Basin State must explain how the referenced document relates to the rules and the referenced document must be published online.</p>	<p>Information is contained in the Resource Operations Plans, see the following links:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Condamine and Balonne Resource Operations Plan 2008 (amended 2015) https://www.dnrm.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/281534/condamine-balonne-amendment-2015.pdf • Border Rivers Resource Operations Plan 2008 (amended 2011) https://www.dnrm.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/105962/border-rivers-rop-may2011.pdf • Warrego, Paroo, Bulloo and Nebine Resource Operations Plan 2006 (amended 2016) https://www.dnrm.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/335841/wpbn-rop-2016.pdf: • Moonie Resource Operations Plan 2006 https://www.dnrm.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/107983/moonie-rop.pdf
<p>D5 Report trade prices</p>	<p>If a trade requires approval by an approval authority, or requires registration, the seller must notify the approval authority, or the registration authority, of the price in writing. Note the definition of 'seller' of water access rights can include the Basin States, the MDBA or the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder (CEWH).</p>	<p>Prices for permanent trades are recorded and provided to the Bureau of Meteorology under their Water Regulations in a permanent trade report. Queensland does not have the power to force sellers of temporary trades to provide prices and cannot refuse a trade if the information is not provided. If the information is provided it is reported to Bureau of Meteorology.</p>
<p>D6 Make water announcements generally available</p>	<p>a. Water announcements must be published in a way that makes them likely to be brought to the attention of interested members of the public.</p> <p>b. Basin States will implement a process to ensure that a person, who is aware of a water announcement before it is generally made available, must not trade a water access right that is subject to the water announcement, or whose price or value would be materially affected by the announcement until that announcement is made.</p>	<p>a. In relation to 31.3, the disclosure and management of water announcements, Queensland publishes all annual announced water allocations at https://www.business.qld.gov.au/industry/water/managing-accessing/accessing-water/authorisations/announced-entitlements</p> <p>b. The Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service reflects the ethics, principles and values prescribed in the <i>Public Sector Ethics Act 1994</i>. The document, <i>Applying the Code of Conduct</i>, contains standards for all employees to put these principles and values into practice, with the following obligations of relevance to the Basin Plan trade rules:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • disclosure of potential conflicts of interests that could be seen as influencing the performance of an officers duty, such as decisions affecting regulatory functions; • undertaking that conflict of interests will be resolved or managed in favour of the public interest; • pursuing the wider moral principles in the public interest such as justice, fairness and maintaining due process; • reporting breaches of the code and official misconduct; • providing efficient, effective, accountable and transparent public administration; • avoid influencing, or using the influence of, any person to obtain improperly a personal advantage or an advantage on behalf of another, or to affect the proper outcome of a procedure established under legislation or government policy; • decisions are made in accordance with government policy and departmental procedures; • ensuring official information is stored securely with access limited to those persons requiring it for legitimate purposes, and it is used only for the collected or authorised purpose; and • no use of confidential or privileged information to further personal interests.

E. Northern Basin Review

Reporting Matter	Supporting evidence to be provided by Queensland	Response (milestone achievement/compliance status)
Reviews of the Plan		
<p>E1 Provide advice and assessments of the MDBA's studies for, and review of, the work underpinning the SDLs in the Northern Basin.</p> <p><i>Applicable to BPIA 13.1</i></p>	<p>The Murray Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) will undertake the review of the work underpinning SDLs for the Northern Basin, in collaboration with New South Wales and Queensland, who will participate in the review and advise on associated studies, processes and final recommendations. States would need to provide evidence of their involvement in the review, including their participation in relevant advisory groups.</p>	<p>Queensland has actively supported all aspects of the Northern Basin Review since 2013. MDBA formed an advisory committee and three working groups to progress the review. Queensland has attended every Northern Basin Advisory Committee meeting held since its formation in late 2012. Queensland has also actively participated in the three working groups formed;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Environmental Science Technical Advisory Group (ESTAG), • the Northern Basin Intergovernmental Working Group (NBIWG) and • the Socio Economic Technical Advisory Group (SETAG). <p>Queensland has attended all working group meetings and provided advice and assessments of all studies for, and reviews of, the working underpinning the Sustainable Diversion Limits in the Northern Basin.</p> <p>Queensland has also attended all meetings of the Lower Balonne Working Group since its inaugural meeting in June 2014. The group was formed by MDBA to provide community input into the Northern Basin Review scientific and socio-economic studies in the Lower Balonne. The group also has reviewed draft reports as they have been released in 2016.</p>

F. SDL Adjustment & Constraints Management

Reporting Matter	Supporting evidence to be provided by Queensland	Response (milestone achievement/compliance status)
Constraints Management Strategy		
<p>F1 Review and provide advice on measures recommended in the Constraints Management Strategy.</p> <p><i>Applicable to BPIA 14.1</i></p>	<p>The Basin States will review the recommendations of the Constraints Management Strategy having regard to benefits and costs, available funding, third party impacts and community views.</p> <p>Basin States will advise the MDBA of their proposed responses to the relevant Constraints Management Strategy recommendations.</p>	<p>The Constraints Management Strategy does not identify any locations in Queensland for priority actions.</p>
<p>F2: Develop constraint management proposals.</p> <p><i>Applicable to BPIA 14.2</i></p>	<p>Basin States may develop proposals to address constraints, having regard to the Constraints Management Strategy</p>	<p>The Constraints Management Strategy does not identify any locations in Queensland for priority actions.</p>
Preparation of proposed measures for SDL adjustment		
<p>F3 Prepare and assess proposals for supply measures.</p> <p><i>Applicable to BPIA 15.1</i></p>	<p>Proponents will prepare proposals in accordance with assessment guideline and informed by the method for calculation of supply contribution. SDLAAC and BOC will assess the proposals.</p>	<p>Queensland is not proposing any supply measure projects for consideration under the SDL adjustment mechanism.</p>
<p>F4 Prepare and assess proposals for efficiency measures</p> <p><i>Applicable to BPIA 15.2</i></p>	<p>Basin States may develop and implement proposals for efficiency measures for inclusion in the BOC package of measures prior to 30 June 2016. Basin States may also develop and implement proposals for additional efficiency measures after 30 June 2016.</p>	<p>Queensland is not proposing any efficiency measure projects for consideration under the SDL adjustment mechanism.</p>
Reallocation of reduction requests		
<p>F5 Request MDBA to propose re-allocation of shared reduction amount.</p> <p><i>Applicable to BPIA 16.1</i></p>	<p>Basin States can request the MDBA to propose a re-allocation of the shared reduction amount within affected SDL resource units in that Basin State.</p>	<p>Queensland advised MDBA by letter dated 28 June 2016 that it is Queensland's strong preference that no apportionment of the shared reduction amount occur (within Queensland or between states) until the Northern Basin Review has been completed, to ensure that the apportionment is informed by full consideration of new scientific knowledge.</p>

G. Critical Human Water Needs

Reporting Matter	Supporting evidence to be provided by Queensland	Response (milestone achievement/compliance status)
Risk management approach for inter-annual planning for critical human water needs arrangements		
<p>G1 Consider the water available for critical human water needs before allocating water to other uses.</p> <p><i>Applicable to BPIA 27.1</i></p>	<p>The Murray Darling Basin Authority (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.</p>	<p>Not relevant to Queensland</p>
<p>G2 Make decisions on allocations.</p> <p><i>Applicable to BPIA 27.2</i></p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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)).</p>	<p>Not relevant to Queensland</p>
Commencement and cessation of Tier 3 water sharing arrangements		
<p>G3 Determine whether the trigger is reached and Tier 3 applies.</p> <p><i>Applicable to BPIA 28.1</i></p>	<p>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 Basin Official Committee 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.</p>	<p>Not relevant to Queensland</p>

H. Water Resource Plans

Reporting Matter	Supporting evidence to be provided by Queensland	Response (milestone achievement/compliance status)
Reporting requirements		
<p>H1 Develop water quality management plans as part of their water resource plans that identify measures to achieve objectives.</p> <p><i>Applicable to BPIA 22.1</i></p>	<p>Please provide a statement of progress where water quality management plans have not yet been developed.</p> <p>The Handbook for Practitioners for Chapter 10, Water Resource Plan Requirements provides guidance regarding the development and accreditation of water resource plans.</p>	<p>Queensland has developed a Water Quality Management Plan as part of the Warrego Paroo Nebine Water Resource Plan. As of 30 June 2016 the Water Resource Plan had not yet been accredited. Queensland has not yet developed Water Quality Management Plan for its other Water Resource Plan Areas. These will be the focus of work during 2016-17 and 2017-18.</p>
Develop of water resource plans for accreditation		
<p>H2 Develop water resource plans for accreditation</p> <p><i>Applicable to BPIA 24.1</i></p>	<p>Please provide a statement of progress where water resource plans have not yet been developed.</p>	<p>Queensland has developed a Water Resource Plan for the Warrego Paroo Nebine Water Resource Plan Areas. As of 30 June 2016 the Water Resource Plan had not yet been accredited. Queensland has not yet developed Water Resource Plans for its other Water Resource Plan Areas. These will be the focus of work during 2016-17 and 2017-18.</p>
Development of an integrated hydrologic model across the Basin		
<p>H3 Adopt eWater source</p> <p><i>Applicable to BPIA 25.1</i></p>	<p>Please provide a statement of progress where eWater source has not yet been adopted.</p> <p>The MDBA standard for water resource plan accreditation is eWater Source for water resource planning and operations, having regard to the modelling practices of Basin States and the nature of water resource plan areas and operational readiness of the model as it relates to a water resource plan area.</p>	<p>The eWater Source model is not yet accredited for use in Queensland catchments. When it is accredited Queensland will develop eWater Source models for the Condamine and Balonne, Moonie and Border Rivers Water Resource Plan Areas.</p>

Attachment 1 – Case Study *Community engagement influences plan outcomes*

Warrego, Paroo, Bulloo and Nebine water resource plan

In 2016, the Queensland Government finalised its review of the Warrego, Paroo, Bulloo and Nebine water resource plan and prepared the Commonwealth Water Resource Plan package for accreditation. This was the first plan in the Murray-Darling Basin to be submitted to the Murray-Darling Basin Authority for accreditation under the Basin Plan.

The plan review involved the engagement of Aboriginal people throughout the catchment to identify Aboriginal values and uses of water and Aboriginal objectives and outcomes for water resource management. Engagement occurred over the course of three years and involved Traditional Owners from the following nine Aboriginal Nations across the catchments

:

- Bidjara
- Budjiti
- Gunggari/Kungarri
- Kooma/Guwamu
- Kullilli
- Kunja
- Mandandanji
- Mardigan
- Murrawarri

Key partners

The Queensland Government collaborated closely with the Northern Basin Aboriginal Nations (NBAN), South West Natural Resource Management group, the Far South West Aboriginal Natural Resource Management group and the Murray-Darling Basin Authority (MDBA).

Consultation outcomes

Aboriginal values and uses of water in the Warrego, Paroo and Nebine catchments were identified from the discussions with Traditional Owners and are summarised in the table below.

Values and uses	Importance
Connectivity through the landscape	Spiritual, physical and cultural connection to the land, water and environment.
Natural springs and mound springs	Recreation, storytelling, water source for travelling on Country, significant cultural and historical sites.
Rivers and waterholes	Recreation, storytelling, fishing, singing, family activities, birthing, burial and economic purposes.
Lakes, wetlands, claypans and gilgais	Cultural and sacred ceremonial sites, storytelling, important water and food source.
Fish traps	Culturally significant and needing protection.
Earthen and stone arrangements	Culturally significant, initiation and religious ceremonies.
Scarred and carved trees	Culturally significant sites signifying ancestry across the region.
Middens	Important cultural sites.
Hearths	Historic and culturally significant.

Values and uses	Importance
Burial grounds and ceremonial sites	Historic and culturally significant, high priority to protect.
Culturally significant plants and animals	Food, trade, storytelling, ceremonies, examples include Murray River cod, catfish, Yellowbelly, mussels, cray fish, yabbies, kangaroo, emu, berries, witchetty grubs, mulga, river red gums, pelicans and black swans.
Water quality	Important to cultural, spiritual and ceremonial practices.
Riparian zone	Provide habitat to culturally important flora and fauna, integral to connectivity to the landscape, cultural sites.

How information was used in the water resource planning process

By engaging with the Traditional Owners and their Nations in the water planning process, the Queensland Government was able to ensure that Aboriginal people had input into the review of the water resource plan and that their concerns and needs – spiritual, cultural, social and economic – were heard and taken into consideration. The identified values and uses were used to inform the development of objectives and outcomes for Aboriginal people with respect to the management of water resources in the catchments.

The following attributes of the water resource planning process are relevant to the Aboriginal values and uses identified in the consultation:

The Queensland water resource plan for the Warrego, Paroo, Bulloo and Nebine catchments is the first in Queensland to include specific outcomes for Aboriginal people:

- availability of water for Traditional Owners who are dependent on water resources to achieve their economic and social aspirations
- maintenance of flows of water that support water-related cultural and recreational values of the Traditional Owners.

The water resource plan protects the near-natural flow regime in the catchments, thereby protecting many of the water-related values and uses identified as culturally significant, such as rivers, waterholes, wetlands, animals and plants.

The water resource plan limits current and future water extractions to maintain the health and integrity of water dependent ecosystems and the associated cultural values and uses.

The original water resource plan included unallocated water for Town Water or Ecotourism. However through having a greater understanding of the needs of Aboriginal people in this plan area the unallocated water has been redesignated to be granted for Indigenous purposes, which if granted will help an Aboriginal community achieve economic and social aspirations.

The Healthy Waters Management Plan establishes an objective to ensure the suitability of water to support the identified cultural, ceremonial and spiritual values and uses of waters across the South West region and sets an outcome for the South West region water resources to remain fit for purpose in relation to cultural, spiritual and ceremonial values and uses of water.

The *Water Act 2000* (Queensland) makes provision for Aboriginal parties to take or interfere with water for traditional activities (hunting, fishing, gathering, camping, performing rites or ceremonies or visiting sites of significance) or cultural purposes, which are activities other than commercial activities that support the maintenance or protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage.

Attachment 2 – Case Study The application of environmental watering principles in Queensland

Chapter 8 Part 4 Division 6 of the Basin Plan lists 11 principles to be applied in environmental watering. The following examples demonstrate how Principle 1 – *environmental watering is to be undertaken having regard to the Basin annual environmental watering priorities* was applied in 2015-16 in two Queensland water resource plan areas.

The 2015-16 Basin Annual Environmental Watering Priorities identified 11 priorities, with two of these being relevant to Queensland catchments. These priorities are:

1. Northern Basin fish refuges – protect native fish populations and in-stream habitats, particularly drought refuges, in the Northern Basin and
2. Silver Perch – contribute to the long-term recovery of silver perch by maintaining key populations, supporting recruitment and facilitating movement and dispersal

Case Study One – Protecting native fish populations through Planned Environmental Water flows in the Lower Balonne

This case study focuses on the Northern Basin fish refuges priority. The Northern Basin has a distinct fish assemblage and is important for the overall biodiversity of native fish in the Murray-Darling Basin. The long-term persistence of native fish in the Northern Basin is reliant on access to suitable refuge habitats during dry times and connectivity to other parts of the system when flows recommence. One strategy for planned environmental water in the Lower Balonne catchment is the Environmental Stock and Domestic (ESD) releases (up to 730ML per day) from Beardmore Dam, just upstream of St George.

Environmental Stock and Domestic (ESD) releases, under section 275 of the Condamine and Balonne Resource Operations Plan 2008, are designed to achieve the following environmental benefits:

- Wetting of lower terraces and benches of the streams within the Lower Balonne Distributary System
- Replenishment of waterholes and to provide connectivity between waterholes throughout the streams within the Lower Balonne Distributary System

Inflows to Beardmore Dam commenced on 11 November 2015. ESD releases commenced on 3 December 2015 and continued until the end of February 2016. The outcome of the releases (see Figure One) was that flows reached:

- The end of the system for Culgoa River
- Almost the entire length of the Birrie River
- Almost the entire length of the Bokhara River
- To Narran Park Gauging Station on the Narran River

Recent research for the Northern Basin Review in the Lower Balonne Distributary System identified ten refuge waterholes on the Culgoa and Narran Rivers that last one year or more. It is believed that the ESD flows of December 2015 to February 2016 provided connectivity to a large proportion of the Lower Balonne Distributary System, as well as topping up these refuge waterholes. Furthermore, the ESD flows coincided with the breeding season of many native fish, thereby providing the cue and the opportunity to spawn.

Case Study Two – Contributing to the long term recovery of Silver Perch in the Border Rivers.

This case study focusses on provision and protection of flows in the Border Rivers which would support recruitment and dispersal of Silver Perch.

In the Border Rivers environmental benefit is provided for by provisions in the Water Resource Plan (WRP) 2003 and the associated Resource Operations Plan (ROP) which give effect to the water sharing and access arrangements in the NSW-Qld Border Rivers Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) 2008. These water sharing and access arrangements are:

- a) Preservation of part of the tributary inflows to the Border Rivers through to Mungindi, during periods of regulated flow from 1 September to 31 March;
- b) Protection of natural low flows in the upper reaches of the Dumaresq River;
- c) Protection of moderate flows in the Macintyre and Barwon Rivers from Goondiwindi to Mungindi.

a) In 2015-16, 100% of the tributary inflows that would result in up to 100 ML/day at Mungindi were protected. This resulted in the protection of 124 days of low flow from the Pike Creek/Dumaresq River junction to Mungindi, between September 2015 and February 2016.

b) For the same year, low flows in the upper reaches of the Dumaresq River were protected. In the winter months (April to end of August) access to unregulated flows can only commence on flows exceeding 150 ML/day and must cease when flow falls below 50 ML/day. In the summer months (September to end of March), access to unregulated flows commences when flows exceed 750 ML/day and ceases when flow falls below 250 ML/day.

c) Moderate flows in the Macintyre and Barwon rivers, downstream of Goondiwindi, were also protected through water access rules where access to the unregulated flow can only commence if there is a minimum 10,000 megalitre flow volume over a 2 day period passing Goondiwindi and must cease when there is less than 3,650 megalitre flow volume over 2 day period passing Goondiwindi. This water access rule is subject to 25% of the available volume being protected from take downstream of Goondiwindi to Mungindi as an environmental share (planned environmental water), which indirectly contributes to the moderate flow outcomes.

The protection of tributary inflows to the main channel and low flows in the upper Dumaresq River in 2015-16 has meant that connectivity in these reaches was achieved for a large proportion of time. This has provided opportunities for fish such as the highly mobile Silver Perch to disperse. Flows protected in the summer months mimic natural flow patterns and may have provided the necessary spawning cue for Silver Perch to move for breeding purposes. The moderate flows protected under the water access and sharing rules would also have provided spawning and recruitment opportunities for Silver Perch and other flow spawners.

The implementation of water sharing arrangements contained within the IGA has provided opportunities for Silver Perch;

- to disperse and colonise habitat,
- have access to food resources thereby improving growth, survival and body condition; and
- complete spawning.