

Roles and responsibilities



Water resource plans

Water resource plans set local rules for water and outline how each region aims to achieve community, environmental, economic and cultural outcomes.

MDBA: Assess and recommend for accreditation

Basin states and territory: Develop and implement



Compliance

An effective and fair compliance system will underpin the integrity of environmental water, water resource plans, water markets, and water entitlements.

MDBA: Monitor and enforce Basin-scale compliance

Basin states: Implement and enforce compliance locally



Water markets and trade

Water in the Murray-Darling Basin can be bought or sold, permanently or temporarily.

MDBA: Provide information and enforce compliance

Basin states: Implement the rules, including allocate water

Australian Competition and Consumer Commission: Provide advice on rules and complaints



Recovering water

Under the Basin Plan water is recovered across the Basin and is retained in the system to keep rivers, lakes and wetlands healthy.

Basin states: Implement some efficiency programs

Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment: Strategic purchases and efficiency programs



Water for the environment

Water for the environment is used to improve the health of our rivers, wetlands and floodplains.

MDBA: Plan, coordinate and prioritise at a Basin-scale

Basin states: Plan and implement at a local level

Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder: Plan and implement across the Basin



Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring, evaluating and reporting are critical to ensuring the way water is managed works and is on track.

MDBA: Evaluate and monitor Basin Plan

Basin states: Report and monitor at a local level

Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment: Monitor water recovery program

Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder: Monitor and report results of water for the environment



Sustainable Diversion Limit Adjustment Mechanism

The SDL Adjustment Mechanism involves a suite of projects that are being developed to ensure water delivery systems are more effective and water losses are reduced.

MDBA: Coordinate, assess and monitor projects

Basin states: Propose, design and implement projects

Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment: Fund and implement projects



River Murray Operations

Infrastructure such as dams and levees are developed, maintained and operated to store water and allow flows to occur.

MDBA: Operate and manage River Murray

Basin states: Day-to-day management of dams, locks, weirs and barrages



The Murray-Darling Basin

Connect with us.

The MDBA has offices in Adelaide, Albury-Wodonga, Canberra, Goondiwindi, Griffith, Mildura, Murray-Bridge, Toowoomba, and regional engagement officers around the Basin.

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Australian Government



Who does what in the Murray-Darling Basin

Water is crucial to life. Our economy, communities, rivers, lakes and wetlands depend on a healthy Murray-Darling Basin. This means a large number of governments, authorities and agencies, who are responsible for many different communities and interests, are involved in managing water.

Managing water is complex. It is underpinned by a partnership between the Australian Government, New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Victoria and the Australia Capital Territory governments.

The Murray-Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) is a key agency responsible for coordinating how the Basin's water resources are managed through the Basin Plan, and uses an approach, based on evidence, that considers the health of the Basin as a whole. The aim of the Basin Plan is to ensure that water is shared between all users, including the environment, in a sustainable way.

The MDBA uses science and research in many fields to make decisions. This includes economics, hydrology, ecology and sociology. The MDBA also considers water governance and law and sustainable systems.

People across the Basin are also key for decision making. Communities share their deep history and knowledge of the rivers and this local knowledge helps guide decisions.

The MDBA uses all the best available information to make its decisions, and adapts water management as new information becomes available.

Key facts

Water is a precious resource in Australia, and we all need to work together to understand and manage the complex and connected river system that is the Murray-Darling Basin. Its value to Australia cannot be lost.



Water in the Basin is managed across four states and a territory, covering one million square kilometres.



Basin state and territory governments manage the water in their own area, in line with nationally agreed principles and plans.



The Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder manages the Australian Government's water entitlements and allocations of water for the environment.

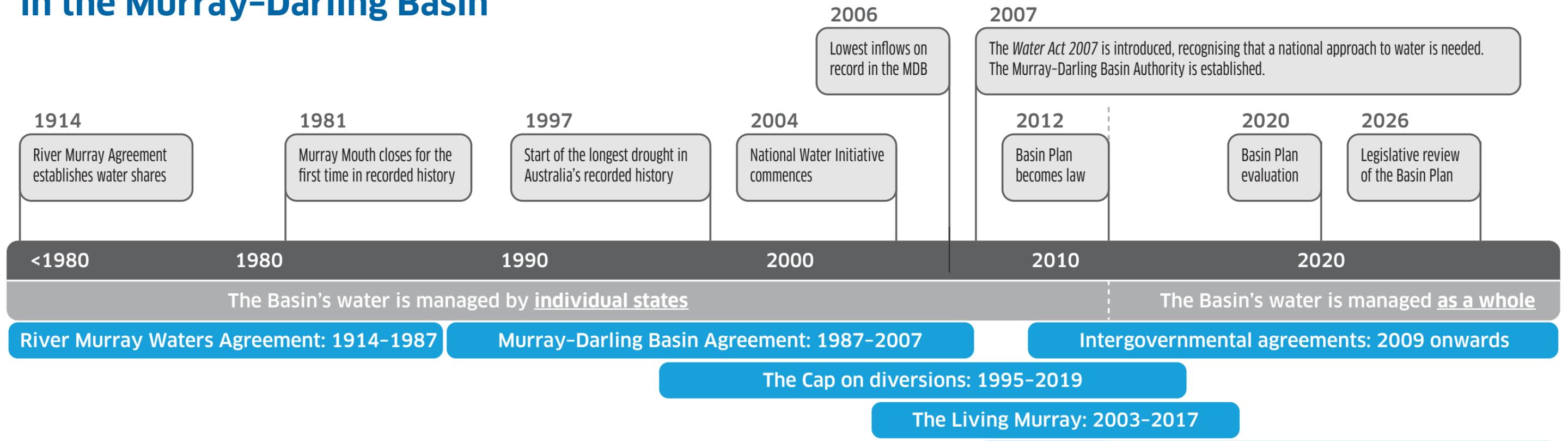


Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment recovers water to achieve the outcomes of the Basin Plan.



The Australian Government minister responsible for water accredits the states' water resource plans, which set the local rules for water use.

Timeline of water management in the Murray–Darling Basin



Transition and implementation of the Basin Plan

In 2012, there was widespread agreement across government that a plan was needed to manage our water carefully and protect the Basin for future generations. The Murray–Darling Basin Plan was developed to manage the Basin as a whole connected system. The aim of the Basin Plan is to bring the Basin back to a healthier and sustainable level, while continuing to support farming and other industries for the benefit of the Australian community. It sets limits on the amount of water that can be taken from the Basin each year, while leaving enough for our rivers, lakes and wetlands and the plants and animals that depend on them.



Transition and implementation of the Basin Plan involves:

- Water purchased for the environment
- New compliance arrangements in place for water use
- Water resource plans to ensure holistic approach and limits on water use
- Water delivered to specific environmental sites
- Monitoring and evaluation of water management on communities, industries and the environment
- Basin-wide delivery of water for the environment
- Northern Basin Review to improve knowledge
- Development of infrastructure to deliver water for the environment
- Improved approach to cultural flows
- New water trade rules