



Cobdogla-Barmera community

In interpreting this information, it is important to understand that there are many drivers of the socio-economic trends reflected in the data. Therefore, the socioeconomic changes outlined here cannot simply be attributed to the Basin Plan – it is just one of a number of factors that affect communities.

This information should be read in conjunction with *Understanding change in Basin communities* on the Southern Basin community profiles page at mdba.gov.au.

Total surface water entitlements available in Cobdogla-Barmera prior to Basin Plan water recovery was 41.4 GL. 22 GL (53.1% of available water) was recovered up to October 2016. 17.6 GL was recovered through purchase (of which 43% was purchased up to June 2011). 4.4 GL was recovered through on-farm infrastructure investment. The net reduction in water available for production is 15.7 GL (39.3% of available water).

Trends in social and economic conditions

AREA POPULATION

Decreased from 5,407 to 5,014 persons (7.3%) between 2001 and 2016

- Most of the decrease was between 2001 and 2006

WORKFORCE

Total area workforce

Decreased from 1,796 to 1,270 FTE (29.3%) between 2001 and 2016

- Half of the decrease occurred between 2011 and 2016
- Workforce participation fell from 33.2 to 25.3 FTE per 100 persons

Agricultural workforce

Decreased 54.8% (349 FTE) between 2001 and 2016

- 46% of the decrease occurred between 2001 and 2011
- Employment in irrigated production decreased 57% (54.6% between 2001 and 2011)

Agricultural manufacturing workforce

Decreased 26.5% (57 FTE) between 2001 and 2016

- Mostly between 2006 and 2016

Non-agriculture private workforce

Decreased 28.8% (184 FTE) between 2001 and 2016

- Mostly between 2011 and 2016

Government services workforce

Increased 7.7% (23 FTE) between 2001 and 2016

- Increasing 20.4% between 2001 and 2011, decreasing 12.7% between 2011 and 2016

ECONOMIC STRUCTURE

Percentage FTE in key sectors:

- **2001:** 35% agriculture, 36% non-agriculture private, 17% government services
- **2016:** 23% agriculture, 36% non-agriculture private, 26% government services

TOWN POPULATION

Decreased from 2,198 to 2,138 persons (2.7%) between 2001 and 2016

- Mostly between 2001 and 2006

57% of the town population was 45 and over in 2016, up from 49% in 2001

- 13% increase in 45 years and over, 18% decrease in under 45s

EMPLOYMENT

Full-time employment

18% of town population in 2016
down from 22% in 2001

Part-time employment

Varied between 11% and 13% of
town population

Unemployment in the town

Constant around 3% to 4% of
town population

SEIFA FOR TOWN: (DECILE RANKINGS, COBDOGLA/BARMERA)

- **2001:** disadvantage = 4/2, advantage/disadvantage = 3, wealth = 5/4, education = 2/4
- **2016:** disadvantage = 3/2, advantage/disadvantage = 3/2, wealth = 5/2, education = 2/3

Land use



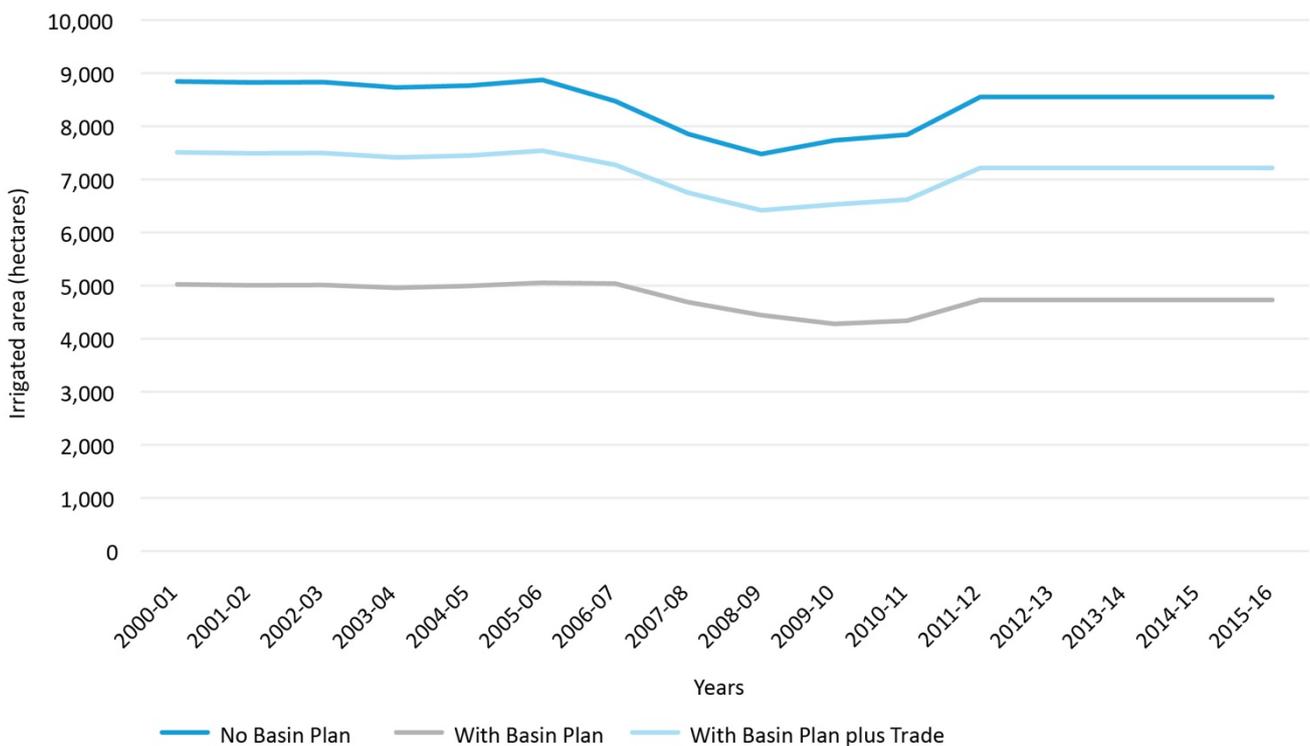
Water recovery programs

Most water was recovered through purchase between 2009 and 2013. Water recovery via the infrastructure programs occurred through the On-Farm Irrigation Efficiency program between 2011 to 2016 and the Private Infrastructure Irrigation Program South Australia in 2012. Irrigation system modernisation planning occurring through the Central Irrigation Trust. The community received funding for the Riverine Recovery project which involved investment in wetland and floodplain management and infrastructure.

Basin Plan impact on irrigated agriculture

The main forms of irrigated production are grapes, fruit, citrus, nuts, vegetables and some annual crops. While the area under nut production has been increasing across the period, the area of vegetable production and annual crops has been quite variable in response to the climate and water allocations. Basin Plan water recovery alone was estimated to reduce the area irrigated by around 43% to 45%. However, the purchase of water into the area has helped to offset some of the effects of water recovery. The net effect of the Basin Plan water recovery combined with water trade is estimated to have reduced the area irrigated by around 14% to 16%. Most of the change has affected the area of grapes, vegetables and annual crops.

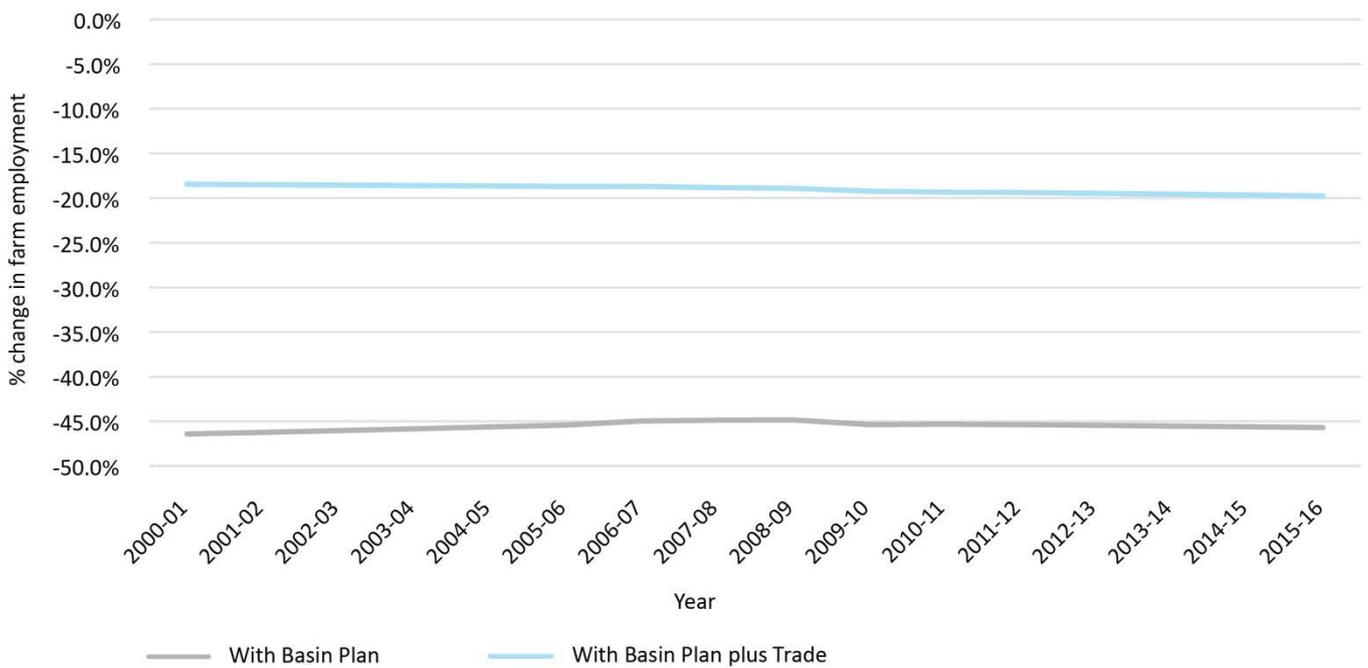
Area of irrigated production (hectares) 2001–16



Basin Plan impact on farm sector

In 2001, farm employment was approximately 670 FTE (including seasonal workers). Farm employment fell by around 57% between 2001–16. Non-Basin Plan factors led to 38% of the change, while Basin Plan water recovery contributed the remaining 19% after accounting for permanent water trade back into the community. In the absence of that water trade, it is estimated the effect of Basin Plan water recovery has led to a decrease in farm employment of around 45%.

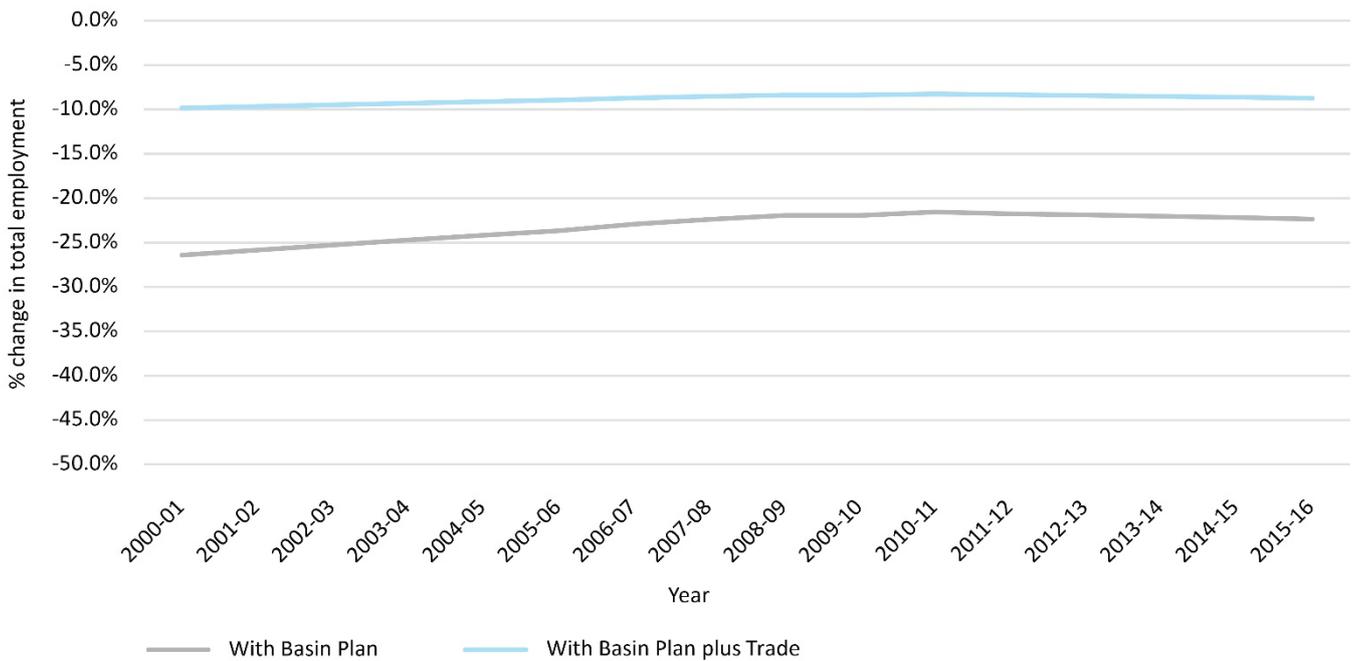
Effect of Basin Plan on farm employment 2001–16



Basin Plan impact on total employment

In 2001, total employment was approximately 1,965 FTE (including seasonal workers). Total employment fell by around 29% between 2001–16. Non-Basin Plan factors led to 20% of the change, while Basin Plan water recovery contributed the remaining 9% after accounting for permanent water trade back into the community. In the absence of that water trade, it is estimated the effect of Basin Plan water recovery would have led to a decrease in total employment of around 24.5%. Given the prevailing social and economic conditions at the time of the water recovery and the trends of social and economic change affecting the community, it is possible the modelling results might under-estimate the effects of Basin Plan water recovery.

Effect of Basin Plan on total employment 2001–16



Updated June 2018