



Wah Wah 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 Wah Wah prior to Basin Plan water recovery was 119.7 GL. 9.8 GL (8.2% of available water) was recovered up to October 2016. 8.8 GL was recovered through purchase (of which 1% was purchased up to June 2011). 1 GL was recovered through on-farm infrastructure investment. The net reduction in water available for production is 8.4 GL (7.1% of available water).

Trends in social and economic conditions

AREA POPULATION

Decreased from 629 to 221 persons (64.9%) between 2001 and 2016

- Mostly between 2006 and 2011

WORKFORCE

Total area workforce

Decreased from 225 to 74 FTE (67.3%) between 2001 and 2016

- Most of the decrease occurred between 2006 and 2011
- Workforce participation fell from 35.3 to 33.3 FTE per 100 persons

Agricultural workforce

Decreased 75.6% (83 FTE) between 2001 and 2016

- Mostly between 2001 and 2011
- Employment in irrigated production decreased 80.5% (73.9% between 2001 and 2011)

Agricultural manufacturing workforce

Remained a small part of the local economy

Non-agriculture private workforce

Decreased 68.3% (50 FTE) between 2001 and 2016

- Mostly between 2006 and 2011

Government services workforce

Decreased 54.5% (20 FTE) between 2001 and 2016

- Increasing 7% between 2001 and 2006, decreasing 61.6% between 2011 and 2016

ECONOMIC STRUCTURE

Percentage FTE in key sectors:

- **2001:** 49% agriculture, 32% non-agriculture private, 16% government services
- **2016:** 36% agriculture, 31% non-agriculture private, 23% government services

TOWN POPULATION

Decreased from 308 to 287 persons (6.8%) between 2001 and 2016

- Nearly all between 2001 and 2006

43% of the town population was 45 and over in 2016, up from 36% in 2001

- 11% increase in 45 years and over, 16% decrease in under 45s

EMPLOYMENT

Full-time employment

33% of town population in 2016
down from 36% in 2001

Part-time employment

Varied around 5% to 12% of
town population

Unemployment in the town

Constant around 1% of town
population

SEIFA FOR TOWN: (DECILE RANKINGS)

- **2001:** disadvantage = 6, advantage/disadvantage = 5, wealth = 7, education = 2
- **2016:** disadvantage = 3, advantage/disadvantage = 3, wealth = 5, education = 2

Land use



Water recovery programs

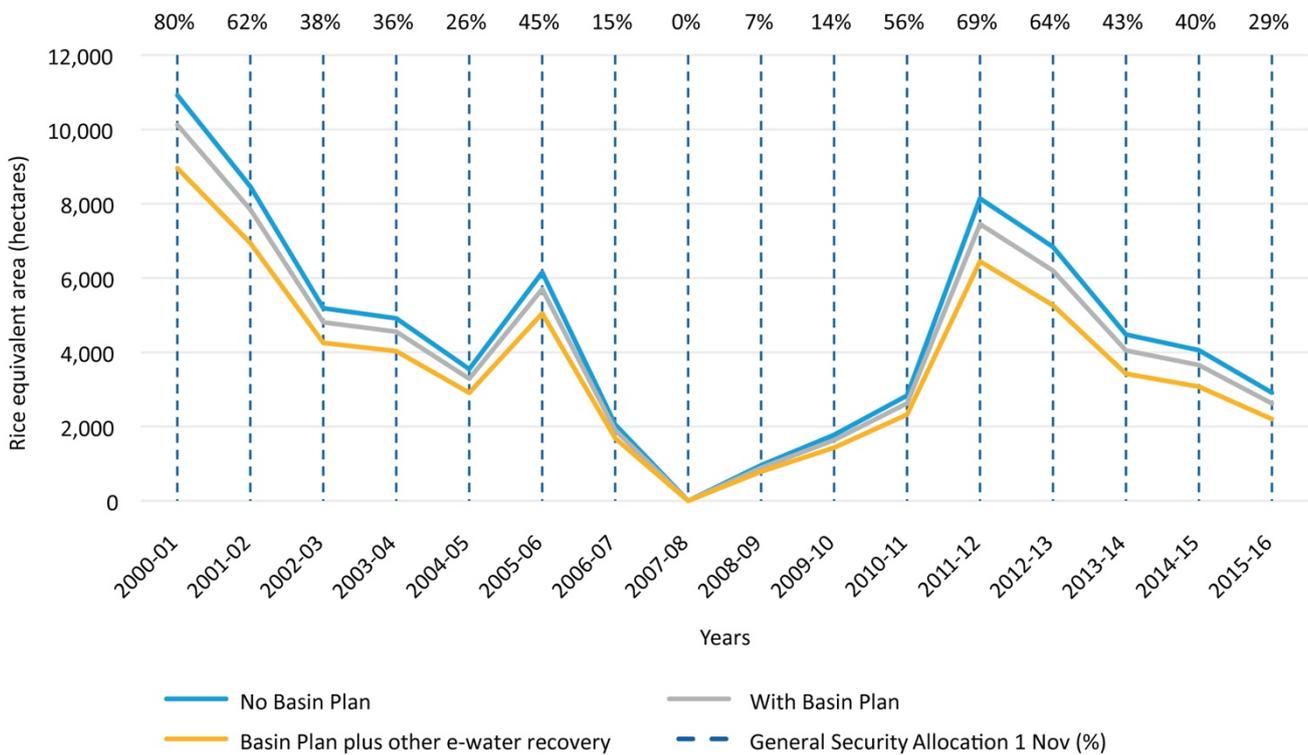
Water recovery was primarily through purchase between 2011 and 2013, then through round 5 of the On-Farm Irrigation Efficiency program.

Basin Plan impact on irrigated agriculture

The main irrigated crops grown are annual crops (summer and winter cereals and oils, pasture, rice and more recently the increasing substitution of land from growing rice to cotton represented as rice equivalent hectares) and nuts. There are also relatively small areas of vegetables and grapes. Vegetable production has declined considerably since the drought while the area of nut production has increased steadily (and 5-fold) since 2000-01.

For the rice equivalent area irrigated, the maximum area irrigated has fallen by approximately 18% to 24%. Around one-third of this decline is associated with the Basin Plan water recovery. The remaining two-thirds of the effect on the area of rice-equivalent hectares is associated with other sources of environmental water recovery. Changes to the area of rice equivalent hectares grown in Wah Wah has also been influenced by the capacity for improved water utilization in the districts further up within the irrigation delivery network.

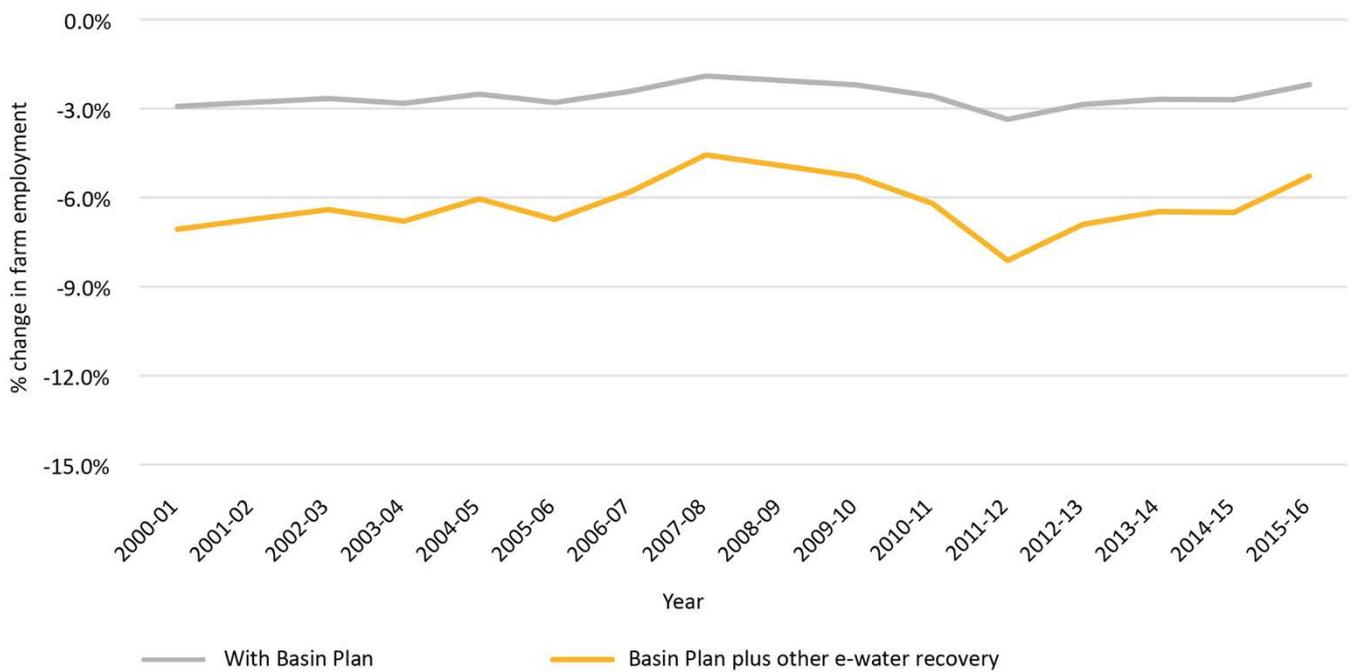
Area of irrigated production (rice equivalent hectares) 2001–16



Basin Plan impact on farm sector

In 2001, farm employment was approximately 125 FTE (including seasonal workers). Farm employment fell by around 75% between 2001–16. Non-Basin Plan factors led to 68% of this change. Basin Plan water recovery reduced the level of farm employment by 3%, while the water recovered for the environment from processes beyond the Basin Plan contributed the remaining 4%.

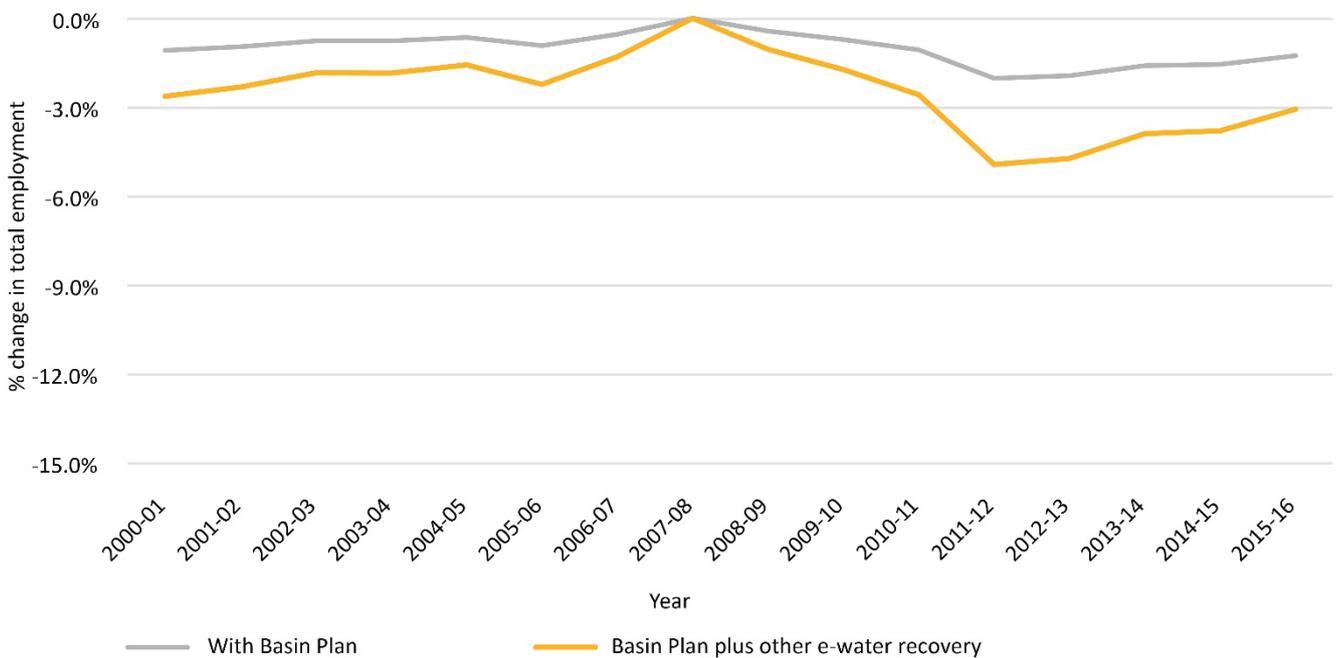
Effect of Basin Plan on farm employment 2001–16



Basin Plan impact on total employment

In 2001, total employment was approximately 230 FTE (including seasonal workers). Total employment fell by around 67% between 2001–16. Non-Basin Plan factors led to 62.5% of this change. Basin Plan water recovery reduced the level of total employment by 2%, while the water recovery for the environment from processes beyond the Basin Plan contributed the remaining 2.5%.

Effect of Basin Plan on total employment 2001–16



Updated June 2018