

Office of the Chief Executive

Ref: EC21-00073

National Landcare Program Phase 2 Review
Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment
[\[nationallandcare@awe.gov.au\]](mailto:nationallandcare@awe.gov.au)

Attention: National Landcare Program Phase 2 Review Team

I am writing regarding the Australian Government's National Landcare Program Phase 2 Review. On behalf of the Murray–Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) I welcome the Government's continuing commitment to improving natural resource management, biodiversity protection and sustainable agricultural initiatives through the National Landcare Program.

The Murray–Darling Basin covers one million square kilometres of south-eastern Australia, across South Australia, Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland and the Australian Capital Territory. The MDBA is an independent agency, responsible for taking a whole of Basin view to the management of the Basin. The Basin Plan provides the overall planning framework for the sustainable management of the Basin's water resources, and the implementation of the Plan is a collective endeavour of the Australian and Basin State Governments. The Basin Plan aims to ensure that the water resources of the Basin are shared between all water users in a sustainable way, striking a balance and maintaining a healthy and productive system to sustainably support industries and communities.

The results of our [2020 evaluation of the Basin Plan](#) showed that the Basin Plan is having a significant and positive impact across the Basin's environment, communities and industries. It found that sustainable water management needs dedicated water for the environment as achieved through the Basin Plan, to work alongside natural resource management.

Specifically, the evaluation found that under future climate scenarios, water management will not be enough to achieve positive outcomes for the system and governments will need to implement a range of additional, practical measures to achieve a healthy and resilient Basin. This includes investment and support for actions that complement water management including catchment soils and vegetation health and control of pests and weeds. These actions need to be targeted and integrated with environmental watering activities to support and complement outcomes, including improved resilience and adaptation to climate change.

Office locations

Adelaide, Albury-Wodonga, Canberra,
Goondiwindi, Griffith, Mildura,
Murray-Bridge, Toowoomba

 1800 230 067

 mdba.gov.au

 GPO Box 1801, Canberra ACT 2601

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As the Australian Government's flagship natural resource management program, the National Landcare Program is a key mechanism to support a more integrated approach to water and natural resource management. The MDBA is supportive of ongoing measures that contribute to the long-term, sustainable management of the Basin's natural resources. We welcome future opportunities to work alongside the National Landcare Program to achieve positive outcomes for the Basin.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A Reynolds', written in a cursive style.

Andrew Reynolds
Acting Chief Executive

21 October 2021