



Out of the BOCs

The Basin Officials Committee (BOC) met via videoconference on 4 November 2021.

BOC welcomed an update from Mr Daryl Quinlivan AO who is responsible for developing a water market reform roadmap in consultation with Basin states. This roadmap is in response to the recent Australian Competition and Consumer Commission's inquiry into the Murray-Darling Basin water markets. Mr Quinlivan discussed a process for identifying areas of potential reform that could be agreed in the short term, while further work continues on the roadmap.

NSW provided an update on its rescoped SDLAM projects, advising that community engagement and consultation on its Better Baaka and Better Bidgee programs was launched on 22 October 2021 and that during consultation, NSW would be seeking feedback from the community and other stakeholders before proposals would be submitted to BOC for further consideration.

On 30 June 2021, the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) launched the Murray-Darling Basin Water Information Portal (MDBWIP). The primary objective of the MDBWIP is to provide improved transparency and public confidence in management of water in the Basin. BOC agreed to continue partnering with the BOM on the development of phase two of the MDBWIP as a means of implementing the June 2020 agreement of the Murray-Darling Basin Ministerial Council to collectively develop a single source water information platform for the Basin.

The Victorian BOC member indicated the operating plan for delivering water from the Goulburn Inter-Valley Trade (IVT) account to support implementation of the interim operating and trade rules introduced on 1 July 2021 has been released.

The MDBA provided updates on several key bodies of work being delivered on behalf of Basin Governments including the Barmah Choke Feasibility Study, the annual review of MDBA performance against objectives and outcomes for River Murray operations, and the Capacity and Delivery Shortfall Program for managing delivery risks in the River Murray. BOC members also agreed to a process to further address and manage delivery risks in the River Murray.

BOC also received an update from the Acting Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder (CEWH), Mr Hilton Taylor. Mr Taylor highlighted recent improvements in environmental conditions in response to e-water delivery and seasonal conditions, particularly in the Northern Basin, noting that flows between the Menindee Lakes and the River Murray via the Great Darling Anabranch are occurring for the first time since 2017 with positive outcomes for Golden Perch, river-bank vegetation and local communities. He emphasised that these flows have been made possible through the coordinated efforts of Basin governments, community members, scientists, river operations, water policy specialists and e-water holders all working closely together. The CEWH also noted high levels of cooperation and coordination for e-delivery right across the Basin.



About the BOC

The BOC has six members – one senior official from each Basin jurisdiction including the Commonwealth – and provides advice to both the MDBA and the Murray-Darling Basin Ministerial Council on matters including Basin Plan implementation and Basin water management policy. The BOC also makes high-level decisions on River Murray operations.

BOC's 2021 workplan is aligned to deliver the priorities that Basin water ministers agreed in [November 2020](#):

- *Support Basin communities through the Murray-Darling Communities Investment Package*
- *Implement the Murray-Darling Basin Plan, including delivery of supply and constraints, efficiency and toolkit measures*
- *Consider reform to the water market following the ACCC final report*
- *Address deliverability risks in the River Murray system.*

More information on the BOC is available on [its webpage](#).



Photo Credit: Johnson's Waterhole, SA 2020. Before and after environmental watering. Courtesy of Renmark Irrigation Trust via the Commonwealth Environmental Water Office.

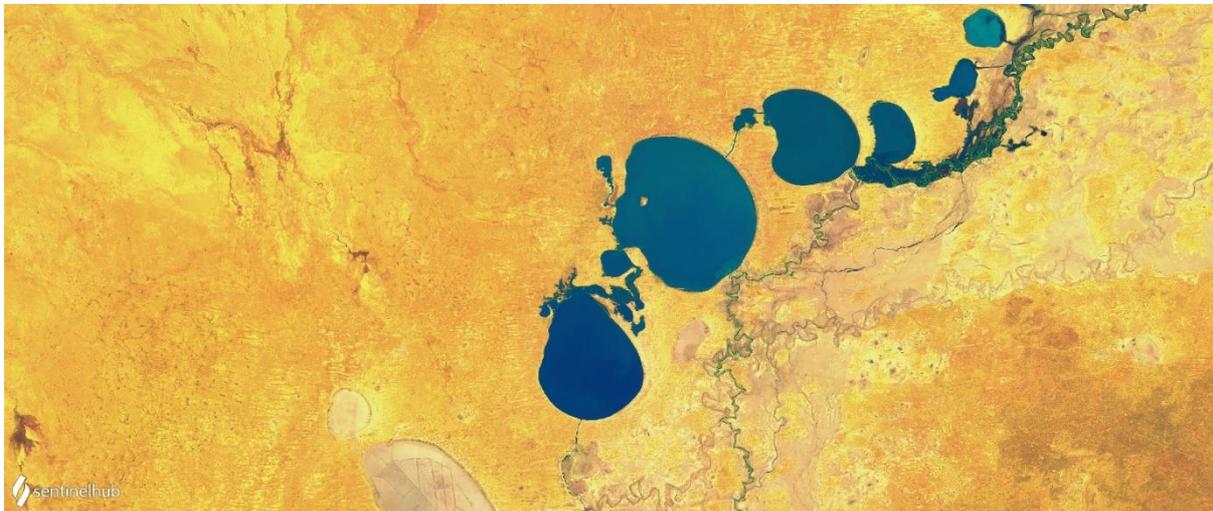
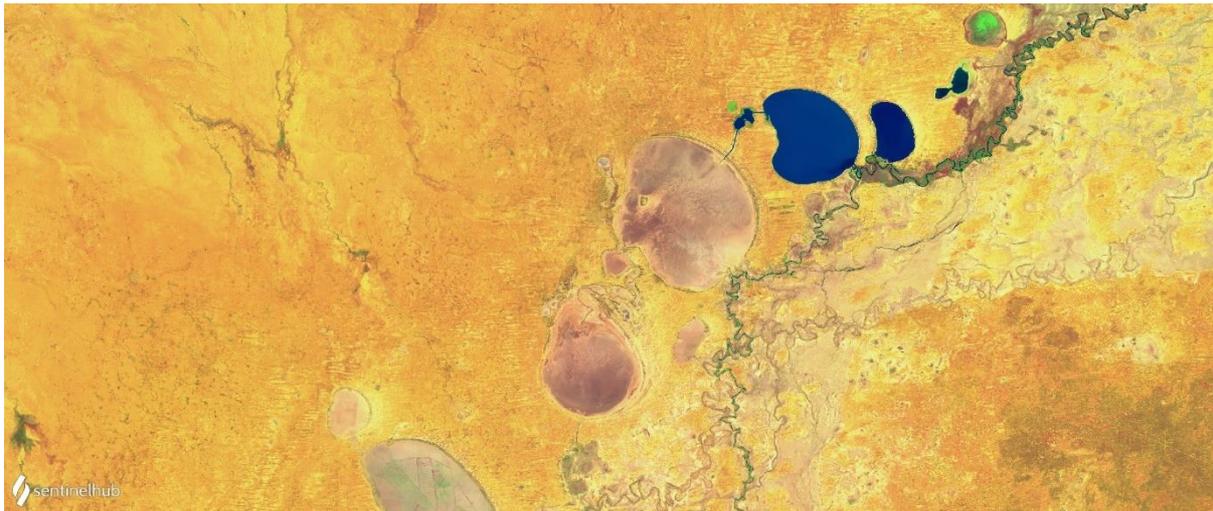


Photo Credit: Menindee Lakes satellite imagery. 6 April 2021 and 8 October 2021.
Commonwealth Environmental Water Office.