The Warrego–Paroo region is in the north-west of the Basin. The Warrego and Paroo Rivers begin in the Carnarvon Range, with floodplains stretching across Queensland into New South Wales.

There are more than 300,000 hectares of wetlands in the Warrego catchment including saline lakes, lignum swamps and semi-permanent water holes. The Yantabulla Swamp and the Warrego River waterholes are among 12 wetlands of national significance in the area.

The Paroo River is ephemeral, and only flows into the Darling River following significant rainfall.

The Warrego River waterholes are a string of large, permanent and intermittent waterholes covering about 500 ha along the river channel in southern Queensland. They are also First Nations cultural sites.

The Warrego River is one of the only places in the Murray–Darling Basin where silver perch breed naturally. The Paroo River provides habitat for many fish species, including golden perch.

A large part of the local economy is driven by wool production and beef cattle. Cotton and horticultural crops make up a small amount of irrigation in the region.
Warrego–Paroo region

Key information

The Warrego–Paroo region is sparsely populated and home to only about 0.4% of the population of the Murray–Darling Basin. Most people live on large agricultural holdings or in the towns of Charleville, Cunnamulla, Eulo and Hungerford.

Annual rainfall is low, with averages of 200–400 mm across the region. Most of the rain falls in the north of the catchment in summer and autumn. Evaporation is high in the region.

For more than 25,000 years the Warrego–Paroo catchment has held cultural and historic significance for First Nations communities and takes in, or borders, the traditional lands of the Bidjara, Budjiti, Gwamu/Kooma, Gunggari/Kungari, Kunja, Mandandanji, Mardigan and Murrawarri nations.

Around the region

1. Lakes Numalla and Wyara within the Currawinya National Park are wetlands of international importance. Lake Numalla holds fresh water but Lake Wyara’s water is saline.

2. Yantabulla Swamp is part of the Cuttaburra Basin system, which covers more than 37,000 ha and sources its water from the Cuttaburra Creek and Paroo River. It is the most important waterbird breeding site in north-west New South Wales.

3. The Allan Tannock Weir is on the Warrego River, 5km from Cunnamulla. It is has a fixed crest spillway that holds 4,772 ML of water. The scheme supplies irrigation for landholders along the ponded area of the weir and domestic water to Cunnamulla.

4. The Allan Tannock Weir is part of an original stock route and was formerly known as Keane’s Crossing.

Feature creature:

Hyrtl’s tandan

Hyrtl’s tandan (*Neosiurus hyrtlii*) is a scaleless catfish also known as a yellow-finned catfish. It is nocturnal and survives by eating aquatic insects, microcrustaceans and molluscs. Like other catfish, it plays an important role in helping to keep insects and other creatures at a sustainable level.

Hyrtl’s tandan can reach up to 40 cm long and ranges in colour from a dark brown-grey to a pale yellowish brown. The hyrtl’s tandan is not widespread in the Basin but has been recorded in the Paroo, Warrego and Condamine rivers.
Who does what in the Warrego–Paroo region

Queensland Government
- allocates water to entitlement holders, coordinates delivery of water for the environment
- develops and implements water resource plans.

Queensland Department of Environment and Science – 13 74 68
- protects and manages parks, enhances ecosystems, protects significant heritage sites and works to mitigate impacts to the environment
- delivers expertise to protect and manage the environment and natural resource base.

Southern Queensland Landscapes – (07) 4620 0111
- a non-governmental organisation managing and developing the natural resources of the southern Queensland region.

New South Wales Government
- allocates water to entitlement holders, coordinates delivery of water for the environment
- develops and implements water resource plans.

WaterNSW – 1300 662 077
- operates and maintains dams and weirs to enhance water supply and security.

Natural Resources Access Regulator (NRAR) – 1800 633 362
- responsible for compliance and enforcement of water management legislation in NSW.

NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) – 1300 361 967
- manages allocated water for the environment, including adaptive environmental water licences held by the NSW Government
- DPIE Water determines the volume of water available for allocation to towns, water users and the environment each year.

Murray–Darling Basin Authority
- prepares, implements, monitors and reviews the integrated plan for the sustainable use of the Basin’s water resources
- operates the River Murray system and delivers water to users on behalf of partner governments
- researches and monitors the quality and quantity of Basin water resources and the condition of its associated rivers, wetlands and floodplains
- creates and shares information about the Basin’s water resources and dependent ecosystems.

Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder – (02) 6274 1111
- manages the Australian Government’s water entitlements and allocations of water for the environment.

Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment – 1800 803 772
- responsible for efficiency programs and working with Basin states.

Local connections
your nearest MDBA office is Goondiwindi
72 Callandoon Street, QLD 4390
we also have an office in Toowoomba
123 Margaret Street, QLD 4350

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.

1800 230 067
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