

Media Release

The Hon Harriet Shing MP

Minister for Water

Minister for Regional Development

Minister for Equality



Thursday, 29 September 2022

POWERING A BRIGHT FUTURE AT WARRNAMBOOL'S BRIERLY BASIN

Australia's largest floating solar array will be installed on Warrnambool's Briery Basin as part of the Andrews Labor Government's agreement with all Victorian water corporations to reach net zero emissions by 2035.

Minister for Water Harriet Shing visit the site today to officially announce the \$1.4 million project which will significantly reduce power costs and reduce emissions by more than 600 tonnes per year.

The project will see more than 1,200 of the latest bi-facial solar panels mounted on top of pontoons and floated on the surface of the water. The panels are designed to harvest light from both sides, increasing the system's efficiency and making them easier to maintain.

This project will not only help the environment but keep water bills low for customers. Briery Basin uses a large amount of electricity to pump water to the Warrnambool Water Treatment Plant.

The 500-kilowatt floating array will be Wannon Water's largest system and follows the installation of a 250-kilowatt system at the Warrnambool Water Treatment Plant and two 100-kilowatt systems at the Hamilton Water Treatment Plant and at the Gateway Road corporate office.

More than 400 floating solar PV systems have been installed across the globe, but this will be the first of its type for the Australian water sector.

The Labor Government is also investing in floating solar projects across the Victoria, with a \$209,149 investment to install a floating solar array on a dam at Lardner Park in Gippsland. This will provide power to the park, while serving as a demonstration on the benefits of floating solar in agriculture at Farm World events.

A net zero water sector by 2035 will mean the industry has reduced its annual emissions by almost 900,000 tonnes per year. The equivalent to the annual emissions produced by more than 250,000 cars on Victoria's roads.

These projects support the Labor Government's ambitious target of halving emissions by 2030 and net zero emission by 2050.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Water Harriet Shing

"As we continue to slash our emissions at the rate of almost double our target, the water sector is leading the way towards a cleaner future – showing consumers and industry that we can tackle climate change and boost renewable energy use."

Quote attributable to Minister for Environment and Climate Action Lily D'Ambrosio

"Renewable energy is key to meeting Victoria's ambitious 2030 target of reducing our emissions by 50 per cent, and it's important essential services like water can harness this reliable and affordable new energy technology."

Quote attributable to Member for Western Victoria Gayle Tierney

"Wannon Water are setting the pace for water corporations across Victoria as they work towards achieving net-zero by 2035."

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