

Media Release

The Hon Harriet Shing MP

Minister for Water
Minister for Regional Development
Minister for Equality



Wednesday, October 12, 2022

VICTORIA LEADING THE WAY ON MURRAY DARLING BASIN PLAN

The Andrews Labor Government is working closely with Victorian Basin communities to deliver all Victoria's obligations under the Murray Darling Basin Plan, protecting regional economies and delivering positive outcomes for communities while securing water for Traditional Owners and the environment.

Minister for Water Harriet Shing today attended the Ministerial Council meeting to reaffirm Victoria's pledge to delivering the Murray Darling Basin Plan in full.

Victoria has recovered 826 GL of our 1,075 GL share of water recovery – more than any other Basin state – and is working to offset the remainder through sustainable diversion limit adjustment mechanism projects like the Victorian Murray Floodplain Restoration Project, which make environmental water delivery more flexible, targeted and efficient.

Victoria is also the largest contributor to the 450 gigalitres of environmental water, proving positive environmental outcomes can be achieved under the Plan's criteria. Victoria has delivered more than 15.9 gigalitres through the GMW Water Efficiency Project with a further 1.7 gigalitres expected through the LMW Water Efficiency Project.

The Labor Government is continuing to support the socio-economic criteria embedded in the Murray-Darling Basin Plan to ensure balanced social, economic and environmental outcomes.

Victoria's high reliability entitlement makes up 41 per cent of the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder's portfolio – in 2018-19 it yielded 70 per cent of the actual allocation. This has delivered significant environmental outcomes including improvement in native vegetation condition and an increase in the abundance of native fish.

Victoria will continue to protect and restore water-dependent ecosystems and deliver positive outcomes for communities, farmers and the environment through a range of investments. Consistency in our approach helps to build integrity and trust in the Basin Plan.

Today's Ministerial Council represents an important step forward for Traditional Owner water interests in the Murray Darling Basin. All jurisdictions agreed to support partnerships with First Nations peoples grounded in the principles of self-determination to support their cultural, environmental, social and economic aspirations through access to water.

The Ministerial Council has agreed to meet early next year to discuss how the Basin Plan objectives can best be met.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Water Harriet Shing

"It has been a long time between Murray Darling Ministerial Council meetings and it great to finally have a Commonwealth Government that is willing to meet and discuss the next steps towards delivering the Basin Plan."

"Victorian Basin communities have done the heavy lifting to ensure we have met all our Basin Plan obligations to date and we're working with urgency to deliver our remaining projects by 2024."

"Basin Governments have worked together for 10 years to deliver this plan without socio-economic harm and it's important we continue to give Victorian communities the security they need to continue delivering the Basin Plan."

Media contact: Siobhan McKenna 0480 147 921 | siobhan.mckenna@minstaff.vic.gov.au