

Welcome to the third issue of the blue-green algae newsletter.

GENERAL NEWS

Murray River Bloom

A blue-green algae (BGA) bloom on the Murray River, that had extended over 800km from the Hume Dam to Robinvale through late March to May, has now ended.

The bloom necessitated a coordinated response from NSW and Victoria, and this was managed by the Murray and the Sunraysia Regional Algae Co-ordinating Committees.

The public was made aware of the bloom through joint media releases, signage, customer letters, websites and telephone information lines.

A New Panel Formed

The Murray-Darling Basin States and the Commonwealth have established a panel of experts and senior officials to provide advice on the Murray River Bloom. The panel, which is chaired by Rob Freeman, Chief Executive of the Murray Darling Basin Authority, has been established for a six month period from April 2009. Siraj Perera is the Victorian Representative on the panel. For further information see: www.environment.gov.au/minister/wong/2009/mr20090409.html

National Algal Meeting Planned

A meeting in Sydney to discuss the re-formation of the National Algal Network and to discuss the technical aspects and management of blue-green algae has been scheduled for 12-13 August 2009.

The meeting is being hosted by the NSW Department of Water and Energy, in association with NSW Health and the Sydney Catchment Authority

Staff Changes

Louisa Davis has taken over the role of the Victorian BGA Coordinator. Deni Warwick, our previous coordinator has changed roles and is now working on the Gippsland Sustainable Water Strategy.



Focus on Goulburn-Murray Water

Goulburn-Murray Water (G-MW) manages water storages north of the Great Divide covering approximately 68,000 square kilometres. The region includes the state's largest irrigation district.

G-MW monitors BGA at its storages and some waterways using the DSE alert framework. The numbers of BGA blooms have substantially decreased over the last six years - there were 16 declared Alert 3 blooms in 2002/2003 water year compared to just two in 2007/2008

Web Portal for Blue Green Algae

DSE is in the process of developing a web-based user interface ('portal'). Local water managers will notify DSE of a bloom via this portal. This system will also automatically inform you if the bloom exceeds trigger values and if additional notifications are required.

The system will be tested by a group of local water managers in the next few weeks. If you are interested in participating in the trial, please let us know.

Blue-Green Algae Website:

www.ourwater.vic.gov.au/ (Water in the environment > Blue-green algae > Monthly Water Report)

If anyone has any blue-green algae stories or tidbits of information, we are keen to hear from you.

Please contact Louisa Davis on (03) 9637 9268 or via email: louisa.davis@dse.vic.gov.au.

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