

Fact Sheet 3: Constraints and Enhanced Environmental Water Delivery projects

Victoria is committed to delivering environmental outcomes and recognises that higher flows provide environmental benefits

Across the Murray-Darling Basin, there are physical and operational barriers, known as constraints, to delivering increased environmental benefits.



Aerial view of lower Goulburn River

Victoria has been looking at opportunities to get better environmental

outcomes by more efficiently delivering environmental water. This includes exploring opportunities to enhance natural higher flow events through putting in place measures that prevent and mitigate any potential impacts of higher flows on public and private land.

Two constraints measures are included in Victoria's package of 22 projects that seek to achieve the Basin Plan's environmental targets without the need for further Commonwealth water buybacks.

These constraints measures are in their early development and will be subject to ongoing community consultation.

Victoria's position

Victoria is committed to delivering environmental outcomes across the Basin and recognises that higher flows provide environmental benefits. The aim of constraints management project is to explore how these higher flows that occur naturally can be enhanced while at the same time addressing any flooding related risks

that can impact public and private land, infrastructure, stock and people.

Our policy remains that we will not intentionally flood people's land without prior agreement, nor will we compulsorily acquire land or easements.

We will work with you to deliver acceptable projects.

Constraints measures in Victoria

There are currently two constraints measures being investigated in Victoria:

1. **Hume to Yarrawonga:** This project involves investigating opportunities to address physical constraints to the delivery of higher regulated flows – up to a maximum of 40,000ML per day as measured at the Doctors Point streamflow gauge. Investigations will examine the potential effects of higher flows on third parties and identify possible mitigation options with affected landholders to

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address unacceptable impacts. Possible options could be easements and/or infrastructure to allow the delivery of these flows to support improved river and wetland health outcomes. Landholder acceptance of potential works will be critical. This project must be considered in relation to the other southern connected Basin constraints measures. The project is a joint initiative between Victoria and NSW.

- 2. New Goulburn constraints project:** This project involves investigating opportunities to address in-channel constraints to the delivery of higher flows of up to 20,000ML per day at Shepparton. Allowing the delivery of flows to the top of the bank would improve river health outcomes. This work will be done in a staged and 'bottom-up' way with communities to understand the risks, impacts and costs, and develop feasible, practical and acceptable solutions to mitigate third party impacts. Building on this work, in close consultation with landholders and communities, further improvements to environmental water delivery will also be investigated. Landholder acceptance of potential works will be critical. This project must be considered in relation to the other southern connected Basin constraints measures.

Enhanced Environmental Water Delivery project

Complementary to the constraints projects, Victoria, NSW and SA are working on an Enhanced Environmental Water Delivery project. This project looks at ways to operate the river to combine held environmental water with natural flows to optimise the use of environmental water to keep our floodplains and wetlands healthy and provide environmental benefits for the whole system. This is an opportunity to do more with less and help avoid the need for further water recovery from the consumptive pool. The project will respect the independent decision making of environmental water holders, Catchment Management Authorities and Water Corporations and engage local communities. The project will take several years to develop, then test and review before it is put into action.



Goulburn in-channel

MDBA consultation and submissions

Victoria has put forward 22 projects to achieve the Basin Plan's environmental targets without the need for further Commonwealth water buy-backs. The projects are being assessed by the Murray Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) and they will not go ahead without their approval and Commonwealth funding.

The MDBA will hold a series of information sessions in Victoria in September to provide an understanding of how this determination will be made. It will call for public submissions on the draft determination in October.

WHERE TO FIND OUT MORE

To find out more about Victoria's projects and implementation of the Basin Plan visit:

www.water.vic.gov.au

To find out more about the Basin Plan and the MDBA visit: www.mdba.gov.au

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