

Help shape a new National Water Agreement

Take the survey

Climate

Response received at:

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1 Confirm that you have read and understand this privacy notice.

Yes

2 Please indicate how and if you want your submission published.

Public

3 Published name

Central NSW Joint Organisation

4 Confirm that you have read and understand this declaration.

Yes

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- 9 Who are you answering on behalf of?
Organisation
- 10 Organisation name
Central NSW Joint Organisation
- 11 Which nation are you responding on behalf of?
Not answered
- 12 If individual, do you identify as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?
Not answered
- 13 What sector best describes you or your organisation?
Local government
- 14 Where do you (or your organisation) live or operate in?
New South Wales
- 15 To start, we'd like your views on water management in Australia.
Question 1: Having agreed national objectives, outcomes and principles on water is important for managing Australia's water resources.
Very Important
- 16 Question 2: Is there anything you would add, change or remove in the principles that deal with climate change? Please give a reason for your response.
Regarding principles under objective 6- need addition of the following.
- 1.recognition and consideration of the value of town water to the economy in strategic and funding frameworks particularly BCRs for critical water infrastructure and water conservation initiatives. The social and economic value of not closing a town due to shortages and the impact of floods on communities is not well understood, quantified, or integrated into decision-making. This risks under-investment in critical town water infrastructure and water conservation initiatives that should be considered and

evaluated. Assumptions repeatedly made in strategies that "no community will run out of water" and that there will be an enduring supply is not our lived experience and makes a big difference to BCRs.

2. regional leadership and inter-governmental collaboration in water planning, management and infrastructure development must be enabled and delegated within regions. This includes Local Government at the decision-making table to ensure local knowledge and experience is considered. The establishment of these forums is critical for the management of climate impacts on towns and communities and will facilitate better coordinated planning and responses that are currently missing.

3. clear and transparent rules for how town water supply dams will be operated to meet critical human, environmental and cultural needs in drought, including when water allocations will be reduced. Clarity and transparency is needed about how decisions will be made and communicated during extreme events to help meet critical needs.

4. greater transparency and clarity is needed around biodiversity offsets - particularly the calculation methodology and applied credit prices in water planning and management decision -making.

17 Question 3: Is there anything you would like to add, change or remove in the principles that deal with urban water reform? Please give a reason for your response.

Further to response to Question 2, (principle 1.5) there is a need for greater understanding and recognition of the productive value of town water where this is not currently recognised or valued in strategic frameworks. This includes for investment in water efficiency programming.

The economic benefits of water conservation that defers or minimises costs associated with providing water services, including costs to communities during drought should be considered and evaluated on an equal basis with supply side measures that improve water security.

Improved approaches to valuing water conservation will facilitate better integration of initiatives into long-term water security planning. These initiatives can lower the cost of providing water services to communities, reduce energy use and GHG emissions and reduce the broader impact on communities during drought.

With reference to principle 1.6- This is critical where currently changes are needed at the

state level to the regulatory and legislative frameworks to enable options such as stormwater harvesting and other innovations in providing a multi-source approach to town water security challenges.

Planning processes need to enable and encourage innovation and new ways of water planning and management drawing on international experience. For example, the Dutch approach to engineering solutions and risk enablement in funding frameworks to trial new technologies.

Principles 1.8-1.11 and how they are implemented and supported by jurisdictions on the ground are a high priority for urban water planning and management in regional NSW.

Principle 1.15- this includes the need for quality training delivered by accredited RTOs at the regional level.

18 Question 4: Is there anything you would add, change or remove in the principles that deal with science, knowledge and partnerships? Please give a reason for your response.

Principle 4.1 does not relate just to traditional knowledge holders but to regional communities in general. The central NSW region has long advocated for regional empowerment in decision making around water planning and management. This includes the Federal and State Government:

- o Supporting and building on the Community Strategic Planning process and granting Local Government access to relevant data to enable informed decision making.
- o Supporting pragmatic place-based planning and service delivery and setting aspirational targets.
- o Ensuring there is sufficient delegation in region to support local decision making and program implementation.
- o Increasing Local Government's influence over plans including funding program design at other levels of government that affect them.
- o Continuing to support and enable Local Government's ownership and management of Local Water Utilities in regional NSW and emergency water transfer infrastructure.

The opportunity exists to codesign a fit-for-purpose arrangement that will see an improved means of managing water for critical human need, particularly in times of shortages and for flood management. The sharing of data, the management of water quality, improved water efficiencies and the initiation of forums for better communication and collaboration, will see us better prepared to manage climate challenges for regional

communities.

Better inter-governmental collaboration is the 'missing piece'. This was evident in the drought, where LWUs in NSW needed a Critical Water Supply Act and redeployment of the Cross Border Commissioner to the role of Town Water Supply Coordinator. This highlighted how neglected water for critical human need has been.

Principles 1.8 to 1.11 are strongly supported and their implementation will be key.

- 19 ****Question 5: ****Considering the draft principles as a whole, do you agree the draft principles are sufficient to support the achievement of the outcomes and objectives?

Agree

- 20 ****Question 6: ****With regard to the principles, are there any gaps or changes required?

Not answered

- 21 **Question 7:** If you would like to provide any other feedback on the principles included in the discussion paper, please do so here. The principles can be read in full in the discussion paper.

Not answered

- 22 **Question 8:** Overall, the principles will be helpful in achieving the objectives of a new national agreement on water and enable better management of Australia's water resources

Agree

- 23 **Would you like to upload a written submission?**

No

- 24 **Have you removed any identifying information from your submission?**

Not answered

25 Upload a submission

Not answered

26 Upload a submission

Not answered

27 Upload supporting file

Not answered

28 Upload supporting file

Not answered