

Feedback form to guide development of the NSW Murray and Murrumbidgee Regional Water Strategies



The NSW Government is preparing regional water strategies to plan and manage the water needs in each NSW region over the next 20-40 years. These strategies bring together the best and latest climate evidence with a wide range of tools and solutions.

The draft NSW Murray and Murrumbidgee Regional Water Strategies have been under development since 2020, and the Department of Planning and Environment (the department) is committed to engaging with all stakeholders in the regions throughout their development. In December 2022, to provide stakeholders with more information about the process and a further opportunity to engage, the department published baseline hydrological modelling results using the new climate datasets and refined water challenges that would be addressed in the strategies.

Clearly identifying the key challenges for the regions is an important step in helping assess what tools and solutions are needed to manage the water needs of the NSW Murray and Murrumbidgee regions over the next 20 years and beyond.

The reports can be found at the following links:

- [NSW Murray Regional Water Strategy](#)
- [Murrumbidgee Regional Water Strategy](#)

We would now like to consult with the community on the modelling results and regional challenges.

Please complete our 10-minute survey to provide your feedback. If you would like to provide further information, there is an opportunity to upload a file towards the end of this survey. As you progress through the survey, your responses will be saved, and

you can resume from where you left. Mandatory questions are indicated with an asterisk (*). If you have any enquiries, or if you would prefer to provide your feedback by email, please contact regionalwater.strategies@dpi.nsw.gov.au.

Your feedback will help the department to further refine the strategies ahead of their finalisation.

This survey will close on **Sunday 19 November 2023 at 11:59 PM (AEDT)**.

Please complete all of the contact details below for you or for the organisation whose views you are representing in completing this survey.

* Your name (or the name of your organisation)

ACT and Region Catchment Management
Coordination Group

Telephone number

[REDACTED]

* Email address

[REDACTED]

* Do you want your name/the name of your organisation to remain confidential?

Please note that your name or the name of your organisation will only be shared in the record of submissions if you provide your consent below. Otherwise, your submission will be published as "anonymous".

- I want my name/my organisation's name to remain **confidential**
- I consent to my name/my organisation's name being shared publicly in the record of submissions**

* What is your main interest in or connection to the NSW Murray and/or Murrumbidgee regions?

Select all that apply.

- I have a cultural connection to Country
- I live in the NSW Murray or Murrumbidgee region
- I work in the NSW Murray and/or Murrumbidgee regions I visit
- the NSW Murray and/or Murrumbidgee regions
- I represent an interest group (please specify)

ACT and Region Catchment Management Coordination Group

- I am interested in cultural water rights and access
- I am interested in water management for regional centres, towns and communities I am
- interested in water for the environment
- I am interested in water for agriculture and emerging industries Other
- Others (please specify)

* Which of the following documents have you read?

Select all that apply.

- I have read the [discussion paper on key challenges for the NSW Murray region](#)
- I have read the [discussion paper on key challenges for the Murrumbidgee region](#)
- I have read the [report on the climate and hydrological modelling results for the NSW Murray and Murrumbidgee regions](#)
- I have not read any of these documents

* What are the main reasons you have not read some or all of these documents?

Select all that apply

- I didn't know about the documents
- The documents are too long
- The documents are hard to understand
- I can't access the documents
- Not all the documents are relevant to me
- Others

* Which of the following documents are you giving feedback on in this survey?

Select all that apply.

- The [discussion paper on key challenges for the NSW Murray region](#)
- The [discussion paper on key challenges for the Murrumbidgee region](#)
- The [report on the climate and hydrological modelling results for the NSW Murray and Murrumbidgee regions](#)

Key challenges for the Murrumbidgee region

The following key water-related challenges have been identified for both the NSW Murray region and the Murrumbidgee region:

- Challenge 1: Ensuring resilient water supplies for regional centres, towns and communities in a changing climate;
- Challenge 2: Improving the health and resilience of aquatic and floodplain ecosystems;
- Challenge 3: Addressing barriers to Aboriginal people's water rights and access; and
- Challenge 4: Supporting agriculture and emerging industries.

Please note that the challenge titles are identical for the two regions, but details under each title are different.

* To what extent do you agree or disagree that these are the key water-related challenges for the Murrumbidgee region?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly agree
Challenge 1: Ensuring resilient water supplies for regional centers, towns and communities in a changing climate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Challenge 2: Improving the health and resilience of aquatic and floodplain ecosystems	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Challenge 3: Addressing barriers to Aboriginal people's water rights and access	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Challenge 4: Supporting agriculture and emerging industries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please outline the reasons for your answers to the previous question.

The ACT and Region Catchment Management Coordination Group (Coordination Group) agrees to the challenges identified for the Murrumbidgee Region. For the ACT and surrounding region, the Murrumbidgee River provides run-of-river water supply for Cooma and Tharwa, as well as Canberra and Queanbeyan region. In drought conditions, the upper Murrumbidgee River (UMR) is a key water source for the ACT and the surrounding region. Given the anticipated effects of climate change, the reliance on the UMR is expected to grow.

The occurrence of the UMR cease- to- flow incident experienced in summer of 2019-20 where water had to trucked into Tharwa township for critical human need highlights the significant impacts of extreme climate conditions. This is exacerbated by the insufficient releases from Tantangara Dam, operated as part of the Snowy Hydro Scheme which diverts more than 90% of Murrumbidgee flow. Such event demonstrates how both natural and human factors can contribute to such challenges in the region.

The impact from the impaired flow regime on the aquatic ecosystems and the cultural values and uses of the First Nations people emphasise the importance of protecting and restoring the UMR.

Overcoming these challenges requires multi-faceted approach that includes effective water management strategies, investment in infrastructure, sustainable water usage practices, and ongoing monitoring and adaptation to changing climate conditions.

While generating renewable energy is important, the ACT and Region Catchment Management Coordination encourage the development of actions that facilitates generating electricity by respecting First Nations'

cultures, contribute to sustainable river and catchment management, and respect the water security needs of downstream communities.

The Coordination Group agrees to supporting agriculture and emerging industries, but this has been rated slightly lower to the other challenges to highlight that the support to these primary sectors should not be at the cost of environmental degradation and river health.

Please provide details of any additional water-related challenges for the Murrumbidgee region that you think should be included.

- Solutions planning for the upper Murrumbidgee Catchment needs to now focus on the sub-region. The upper Murrumbidgee Catchment has unique regional nuances and challenges and would be better suited to a sub-regional approach to exploring solutions to these challenges.
- Effectively addressing water security in the upper Murrumbidgee requires a joint approach between NSW and ACT. This may be in the form of a long-term water security plan for the ACT and Region.

Climate and hydrological modelling

The climate and hydrological modelling report presents climate and baseline hydrological modelling results under 3 plausible climate scenarios including:

- historical climate
- long-term historical climate dry
- future climate.

Presenting these results for the NSW Murray and Murrumbidgee regional water strategies is intended to inform the community's understanding of the range of potential climate challenges the regions' water resources may face into the future.

* **Do you understand the details of the 3 climate scenarios?**

Yes

No- Understand a bit but not too confident to put a definite yes.

Is there any additional information we could include, or different ways we could present the information, to make these scenarios easier to understand?

The ACT and Region Catchment Management Coordination Group encourages the NSW Government to work with the ACT Government on climate and hydrological modelling to ensure a common messaging to the public on the long-term water security planning for the ACT and Region. The Coordination Group provides the forum for a collaborative engagement on regional water security solutions. Members on the Coordination Group includes representatives from the ACT Government, NSW Government, Icon Water, NSW Local Councils (Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council, Yass Valley Council, Snowy Monaro Regional Council), NSW South East and Local Land Services, National Capital Authority, the Community and the First Nations.

*** Do you think the climate scenarios selected are reasonable?**

- Yes
- No (please outline why not)

*** Would you like further information on a particular section or result within the climate and hydrological modelling report?**

- Yes (please provide the section heading, page number and reason/s why this information would be helpful to you)**
- No

*** Do you think any key results within the climate and hydrologically modelling report require further consideration in the challenge discussion papers?**

- Yes (please provide the section heading, page number and reason/s why further consideration is required).
- No

Responses to the following 3 questions help us understand how effective our communication and engagement activities are in reaching our diverse community and stakeholders. This enables us to communicate more clearly and improve opportunities for everybody to have their say.

*** How did you hear about this survey?**

Select all that apply.

- Community group
- Department of Planning and Environment website
- Email or e-newsletter from the department**
- My workplace
- Newspaper
- Post/mail Radio
- Social media (please specify channel/s e.g. Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn)

- Word of mouth
- Other (please specify)

Prefer not to say

* Do you identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander?

- Aboriginal
- Torres Strait Islander
- Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
- Neither Aboriginal nor Torres Strait Islander**
- Prefer not to say

* Do you speak a language other than English at home?

- Yes (please specify below)

- No**
- Prefer not to say

To finish this form and have your responses recorded, please press the submit button below. On the following page you will be presented with a copy of the responses you have submitted. You may choose to print or to download and save your responses for your records.

Thank you for completing this form.