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## First 4 regional water strategies finalised



*Image credit: Destination NSW*

Regional water strategies for the Gwydir, Border Rivers, North Coast and South Coast regions have now been finalised. The strategies put these regions on the path towards sustainable water management into the future.

The strategies are the first-ever long-term plans for water management in each catchment. Each strategy puts tangible actions in place to improve the security, reliability, quality and resilience across the state over the next 20 to 40 years. They bring together the latest climate evidence with a range of solutions to manage the water needs of communities, industries and the environment.

Each strategy identifies the key regional challenges for water management for the coming decades, and outlines the actions needed to respond to those challenges. The final strategies are adaptive, with review processes built in, ensuring each region's future water management is effective and relevant.

They have been developed in cooperation with water service providers, local councils, communities, Aboriginal people, industry groups, community groups and other stakeholders across NSW.

These are the first 4 of 12 regional water strategies and are available on the [department's website](#). The remaining strategies will be finalised in late 2022 and throughout 2023.

## Using environmental DNA in water management



A new environmental monitoring program is peeling back the curtain on the secret life of fish and other aquatic animals living in NSW's coastal rivers.

Our water scientists are collecting water samples from over 30 rivers along the NSW coast to help us understand and support the creatures which call them home.

A small sample of water can reveal a surprising amount of information, including what creatures are calling the river home at different stages of their life. It may even tell us what wildlife are drinking or living near the stream.

This information can help us make informed decisions about our water management. For example, if we know that migratory Australian Bass are present, we can manage water to ensure that fish passage stays well connected, so they can travel from the upper freshwater reaches of rivers down to coastal estuaries.

The team have already collected more than 100 samples from rivers and waterways across the Lower North Coast, Hunter, Central Coast and Bega Valley. Works will expand further in 2023.

Check out the [team in action](#), or find out more on [our website](#).

## New Dungowan Dam and Pipeline Project Environmental Impact Statement sessions held in Tamworth



*Image credit: Andrew Pearson Photography*

The New Dungowan Dam and Pipeline Project team were in Tamworth from 21 to 26 November to answer community questions about the project and its Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

Engagement on the project began in January 2020, with EIS webinars and community information sessions on the draft technical reports kicking off from June 2021.

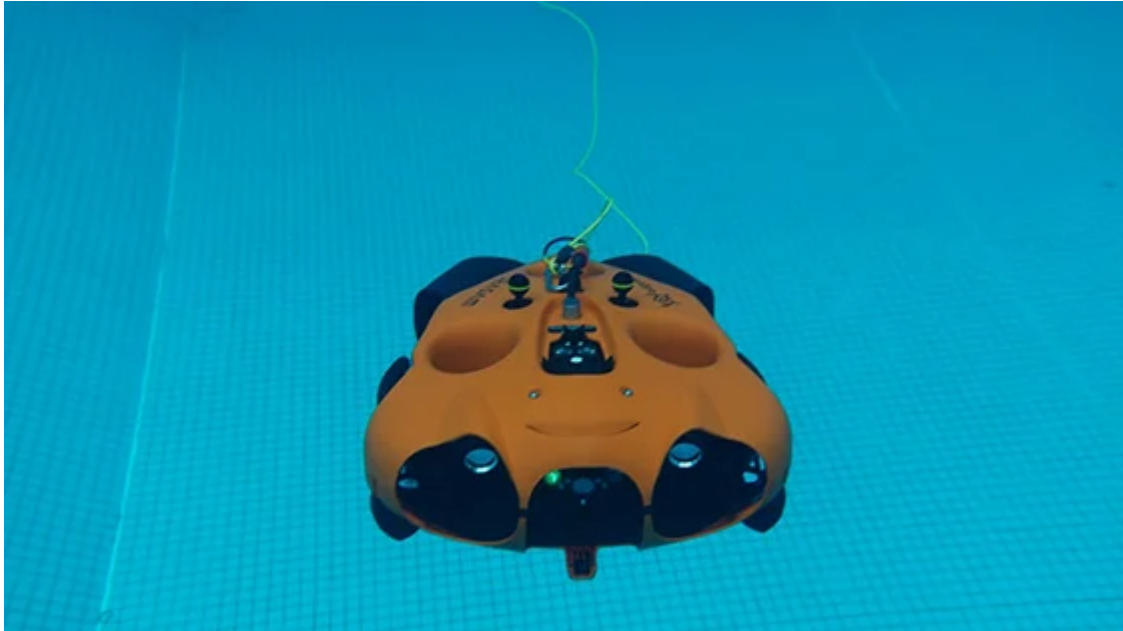
So far, the Dungowan team have held 70 community events with over 1,300 attendees, 110 plus stakeholder briefings and more than 420 landholder meetings. Last week project officers met with key stakeholders and residents as part of the EIS exhibition.

The EIS was exhibited from 26 October to 7 December. Now that the EIS exhibition period has closed, it will take several months to review public submissions and address people's feedback. A submissions report will be published next year.

Regular community engagement will continue in 2023. Subject to planning approval, construction of the dam and stage 2 of the pipeline is expected to start in 2024.

[Visit our website for more information.](#)

## Manly Hydraulics Laboratory acquires Remotely Operated Vehicle for underwater work



The Manly Hydraulics Laboratory (MHL) has recently complemented its survey equipment with an underwater Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV), capable of underwater GPS geolocation.

The ROV can be attached by cable to an autonomous buoy, which has a GPS sensor on board so it can locate its own position, and the position of the ROV when it moves underwater. The buoy then uses a Wi-Fi transmitter to send data up to 300 metres.

The ROV is linked to a cloud-based digital data storage and analysis platform that allows it to store, review, and centralise all data collected during the dives. This data is linked to the media recorded during the dives and can be shared with others.

MHL will use the ROV for projects ranging from seawall and marine structure inspections to underwater mapping of diverse infrastructures or environmental features like seagrass. It will also support underwater operations when a diver is required, making dives safer.

The ROV structure is also highly modular. Supplementary instruments like multibeam sonar, doppler velocity logger (DVL) or action cameras and diving lights can easily be added, so the ROV can be used for more purposes.

Read more about the work MHL do on our [website](#).

## New local intelligence devices available for non-urban water metering reform



*Image credit: SigSense*

Three telemetry-enabled [local intelligence devices](#) (LIDs) have been listed for use for non-urban metering, including one which can transmit data from multiple meters.

The new devices are:

- FlowPRO Multipoint Monitoring System by Campbells Scientific Australia
- Captis Pulse and the Captis Multi by SigSense.

The listing of these LIDs doubles the number of devices available for water users.

The FlowPRO Multipoint Monitoring System is the first listed LID that supports the transmission of data from multiple meters. It is a cost-effective solution for water users who can now purchase a single LID for use with up to 4 meters.

These new LIDs have been eagerly awaited by water users and meter installers and their listing is a significant step in the progress of the non-urban water metering reform. It creates an additional pathway for a large cohort of water users to become compliant.

Check if you need to be meter ready on the [department's website](#).

## Extension of non-urban water metering compliance dates for Southern Inland and Coastal NSW water users



Water users in the NSW Southern Inland and Coastal regions will be given extra time to install non-urban metering equipment due to recent rainfall and widespread flooding.

The new compliance dates are:

- 1 June 2023 for Southern Inland (extended by 6 months)
- 1 December 2024 for Coastal NSW (extended by 12 months).

Work is underway on regulatory amendments to give these changes effect.

Despite the extension, if you can install approved metering equipment ahead of the new deadlines, you should do so. If you are replacing old or damaged metering equipment, you must ensure your new meters comply with non-urban metering rules regardless of your compliance date.

We remind water users affected by flooding that, if your meter is moved due to flooding and is still operating, it must be revalidated by a duly qualified person (DQP) when it is reinstalled.

If your meter has been moved or damaged due to flooding, and no longer operates properly, you must submit [a s91i self-reporting form](#) to WaterNSW within 24 hours of realising the meter is no longer operating properly.

For more information visit our [website](#).

Flood works may need approval before flood events



*Image credit: Catherine Fuller*

Constructing levees, banks or other works on floodplains requires an approval from WaterNSW unless an exemption applies.

Unlawful flood works can divert flood water to unexpected areas, increasing the risk of flooding for adjoining properties and local communities, and creating a flow-on effect for the environment.

The Natural Resources Access Regulator (NRAR) has been providing information on approved flood works to local councils and the NSW State Emergency Service (SES) to support their flood emergency management roles.

NRAR has received reports of allegedly unlawful flood works and may inspect the sites of these works when flooding recedes, and it is safe to do so.

For information on whether an exemption applies, visit the [WaterNSW website](#).

View current flood work approvals, and check if properties near you have approvals, through the [NSW Water Register](#).

[Report alleged unlawful or unapproved levees](#) online or via NRAR's hotline 1800 633 362.

For emergency help in floods and storms, call NSW SES: [132 500](#)



Please note: Current weather conditions may impact scheduled consultations. Please remain up to date on any changes via our [stakeholder engagement page](#).

### **Draft replacement Richmond River Area Unregulated, Regulated and Alluvial Water Sources Water Sharing Plan Public exhibition 20 October – 18 December 2022**

The Richmond River community has been devastated by the recent catastrophic floods. However, there is a legal requirement to replace the water sharing plan. In recognition of current community priorities, we are limiting changes proposed in the draft water sharing plan to state-wide policy updates and minor plan improvements.

The public exhibition period has also been extended to 60 days to provide additional opportunity for those who wish to make a submission.

To find out more and have your say, please visit our [project page](#).

### **Draft replacement Water Sharing Plan for the Tweed River Area Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources Public exhibition 31 October – 18 December 2022**

The water sharing plan establishes rules for water management including the limit of the total volume of water that can be extracted from the water sources in the Tweed River Area Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sharing Plan area.

To find out more and have your say, please visit our [project page](#).

### **Hydrometric gauging stations installations and upgrades consultation 1 November - 31 December 2022**

The department is seeking stakeholder input on the site locations of gauging stations in the Northern Murray Darling Basin. To find out more and have your say, please visit our [project page](#).

### **Floodplain Harvesting licence rules in the water sharing plan for the Namoi valley Public exhibition 1 December 2022 - 29 January 2023**

The draft rules for floodplain harvesting access licences to be included in Namoi water sharing plans are now on public exhibition. To find out more and have your say, please visit our [project page](#).

## Latest water news from the department

- [New technology to help irrigators protect native fish](#)
- [Planned Snowy environmental flow reduced](#)
- [Have your say on Namoi floodplain harvesting rules](#)
- [Billions of litres of water saved](#)
- [Planning for the future of water on the South Coast](#)

[View all](#)



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## Contact us

Water News is our monthly update on water planning, management and reform in NSW. If you have any questions or feedback contact us at:

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