

## Changes made to the NSW Floodplain Harvesting Policy in 2018

Floodplain harvesting is the capture and use of water flowing across a floodplain. This is an important source of water for industry, particularly in the northern basin areas of NSW.

### NSW Floodplain Harvesting Policy

In 2013, the NSW Government introduced the Floodplain Harvesting Policy to stop unconstrained floodplain harvesting by bringing it into a licensing framework. The policy is currently being implemented in the designated floodplains of the five northern NSW valleys. It will then be rolled out across the state.

Floodplain harvesting licences and approvals will be in place for the designated floodplains in the northern basin by 2019.

### Changes made to the policy in 2018

The policy changes reflect lessons learnt during the initial implementation. They incorporate feedback from all stakeholders made as part of a formal submission process in March to April 2018. The policy now:

- allows a valley to manage growth in use by applying an overall plan limit or splitting the limit into floodplain harvesting and non-floodplain harvesting components
- clarifies that 'floodplain harvesting' includes the capture of rainfall runoff
- provides for a rigorous, staged approach to improving monitoring of floodplain harvesting
- allows the development of valley-specific account management rules.

### The key benefits of the changes

The proposed amendments will ensure that NSW remains at the forefront of best practice management of floodplain harvesting diversions by:

- providing more clarity and certainty about how floodplain harvesting will be managed
- better protecting downstream users and the environment from the effects of unconstrained floodplain harvesting
- improving the social licence for legitimate floodplain harvesting activities to continue
- providing a licensing framework that is the basis for an effective compliance and enforcement regime
- ensuring that water-sharing rules for floodplain harvesting are transparent and publicly consulted on, for improved economic, social and environmental outcomes.

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