

# Regional Water Strategies Public Exhibition 2



## Submission Questionnaire

### **Border Rivers Water Strategy** **Challenges and shortlisted actions**

The NSW Government is taking action to improve long-term water security for the Border Rivers. The Border Rivers Regional Water Strategy sets out a shortlist of proposed actions to help deliver healthy and resilient water resources for a liveable and prosperous region.

#### **Your voice is important**

This is your opportunity to let us know which actions you support and think should be implemented to help set the region up for the future.

This questionnaire will take approximately 15 minutes to complete, and your response can remain anonymous if you wish (see question 7).

Questions marked with an asterisk (\*) require an answer.

If you have any questions about the questionnaire, please email: [regionalwater.strategies@dpie.nsw.gov.au](mailto:regionalwater.strategies@dpie.nsw.gov.au)

You can also provide feedback via [our submission platform](#).

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### 1. Your details

\* Email address:

\* Name:

\* Address:

\* Contact phone number:

\* **Do you identify as an Aboriginal person?** (select one)

Yes     No     Choose not to answer

\* **Are you making this submission as an individual or as a representative of an organisation?** (select one)

Individual     Organisation

## 2. Organisation or business details

**If making this submission as a representative of an organisation, who do you represent?** (select one)

**Government** (select one)

- Commonwealth
  New South Wales
  State other
  Local
- Local Water Utility

**Peak representative organisation** (select one)

- Environment
  Industry
  Business group or business chamber
  Community

**Aboriginal organisation** (select one)

- Yes
  No

**Other** (select and provide details) \_\_\_\_\_

N/A

## 3. Regional water challenges

We have identified **five water challenges** that are an immediate priority. More detail about each regional challenge is available in the [Consultation Paper](#).

### 1 Increased surface water security risks for towns in the region

Less reliable flows in rivers and creeks will increase water security and water quality risks for towns and rural landholders that rely on these water sources.

### 2 Risk of reduced water availability will impact the regional economy

The region's main economy of agriculture relies on water accessed through general security licences which has low reliability. A drier future could increase the frequency and severity of droughts and further reduce the reliability of licences. This would have significant impacts on the regional economy.

### 3 Dismantling barriers to Aboriginal water rights

*'We can't sing our song no more, we can't live on the river no more to look after her, for you all' (Gomeroi)*

*Yaama Nginda Gomeroi Wunnungulda. We are Gomeroi, we have our way of doing business. You have to be invited to sit around our fire. We share language and we engage together. You are asked to identify who you are and what you represent and be clear in your intent. Then, and only then can we do business together.*

### 4 Sustaining the health and resilience of natural ecosystems

River regulation, extraction and water infrastructure operations have changed flow variability, water quantity and water quality. This has impacted the health of water-dependent ecosystems and assets in the region and connected valleys, affecting the resilience of water dependent ecosystems.

### 5 Improving connectivity to support downstream need

Extended cease-to-flow and low-flow periods create risks for towns, basic landholder rights and high priority environmental needs at the end of the Border Rivers system and further downstream. A drier future could increase their frequency and severity of cease-to-flow and low flow periods.

**Do you agree that these are the priority water challenges for the Border Rivers region that we need to focus on?** (select one)

Yes     No

**If no, please outline what you see as the priority water challenges in this region over the next 20 – 40 years?**

## 4. Addressing the challenges

We have developed four regional priorities with actions under each. We want to know which of the actions you support.

The regional priorities are:

- 1 Address knowledge gaps and make information easily accessible
- 2 Do more with less water
- 3 Make the region more resilient to climate variability
- 4 Share water differently to address the critical needs of Border Rivers and downstream users

### Priority 1: Address knowledge gaps and make information easily accessible

The actions shortlisted under this priority will:

- fill knowledge gaps
- make information more accessible so Aboriginal people, water managers and users have access to the right amount of information at the right time to help them make decisions.

| Proposed action |  | Do you support this action?                              |
|-----------------|--|--|
| 1.1             | Improve public access to climate information and water availability forecasts                                | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 1.2             | Develop ongoing arrangements for participation of local Aboriginal people in water management                | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 1.3             | Improve understanding of river flows, water use and water quality at priority locations in the Border Rivers | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 1.4             | Invest in continuous improvement in water modelling in the Border Rivers region                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |

#### A) Do you have any comments on the proposed actions identified?

### Priority 2: Do more with less water

The actions shortlisted under this priority will:

- use water more efficiently
- achieve shared benefits from water delivery and maximise social, cultural, economic and environmental outcomes when water is used.

| Proposed action |   | Do you support this action?                              |
|-----------------|---|--|
| <b>2.1</b>      | Support adoption of on-farm water use efficiency measures   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <b>2.2</b>      | Coordinate the management of irrigation water releases and water for the environment to improve ecological outcomes | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <b>2.3</b>      | Identify and address physical barriers to the delivery of water for the environment                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <b>2.4</b>      | Provide clarity and certainty for environmental needs during drought operations                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |

#### A) Do you have any comments on the proposed actions identified?

### Priority 3: Make the region more resilient to climate variability

The actions shortlisted under this priority will:

- encourage agricultural diversification through investigating increasing the availability of high security licences
- explore opportunities to make sure the water entitlement and access framework can cater to the development of emerging industries
- support Aboriginal people to be more involved in water management, by both sharing their traditional knowledge and contributing to decision making
- reduce the impact of infrastructure and land management on fish and water dependent ecosystems.

| Proposed action |   | Do you support this action?                              |
|-----------------|---|--|
| <b>3.1</b>      | Increase the availability of high security water access licences                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <b>3.2</b>      | Ensure the water management framework can support sustainable economic diversification  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <b>3.3</b>      | Support place-based initiatives to deliver cultural outcomes for Aboriginal people      | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <b>3.4</b>      | Support Aboriginal business opportunities in the Border Rivers region                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <b>3.5</b>      | Mitigate the impact of water infrastructure on native fish                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <b>3.6</b>      | Fully implement the NSW Floodplain Harvesting Policy                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <b>3.7</b>      | Remediate unapproved floodplain structures  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <b>3.8</b>      | Identify significant riparian, wetland or floodplain reaches to protect or rehabilitate | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |

#### A) Do you have any comments on the proposed actions identified?

### Priority 4: Share water differently to address critical water needs of Border Rivers and downstream users

The actions shortlisted under this priority will:

- build knowledge of the critical needs of the region
- secure water sources for towns
- make water policy and water determinations adaptable in response to changing climate conditions
- investigate ways to improve connectivity through the system and with the Barwon–Darling River.

| Proposed action |  | Do you support this action?                              |
|-----------------|--|--|
| 4.1             | Map critical drought refugia   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 4.2             | Support towns to understand if groundwater can provide a reliable water supply when surface water availability is limited    | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 4.3             | Investigate innovative projects to support bushfire efforts  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 4.4             | Investigate sustainable levels of groundwater extraction in the Border Rivers Alluvium and the Great Artesian Basin aquifers | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 4.5             | Investigate ways to improve connectivity with the Barwon-Darling on a multi-valley scale                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |

**A) Do you have any comments on the proposed actions identified?**

## 5. Other comments

**A) Should any proposed actions in this consultation paper not be shortlisted and why?**

**B) Should any other options in Attachment 1 of the Consultation Paper be shortlisted and why?**

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## 6. Implementation of the Border Rivers Regional Water Strategy

An Implementation Plan will be included in the final Border Rivers Regional Water Strategy.

**A) Which actions should be implemented first and why?**



### Making your submission public

To promote transparency and open government, we intend to make all submissions publicly available on our website, or in reports. Your name or your organisation's name may appear in these reports with your feedback attributed.

#### If you would like your submission and/or feedback to be kept confidential, please let us know when making your submission.

If you request that your submission is to be kept confidential, it will not be published on our website or included in any relevant reports; however, it will still be subject to the *Government Information Public Access Act 2009*.

Your submission will be stored securely, consistent with the department's Records Management Policy and you have the right to request access to, and correction of, your personal information held by the department.

Further details can be found in our privacy statement available on our website.  
[www.industry.nsw.gov.au/privacy](http://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/privacy)

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## 7. Information on confidentiality and privacy \*

I give permission for my submission to be publicly available on the NSW Department of Planning and Environment website.

Yes     No

I would like my personal details to be kept confidential.

Yes     No

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## 8. Would you like to be kept updated on progress on the development and implementation of the Border Rivers Regional Water Strategy?

Yes     No

If yes, please provide your details below.

\* Email address:

\* Name:

\* Address:

\* Contact phone number:

## 9. How did you hear about the Public Exhibition of this strategy?

We are interested to know how you heard about the opportunity to make a submission. Please indicate the communication methods below:

- Newspaper
- Radio
- Department of Planning and Environment website
- Direct email
- Social media
- Have your say NSW Government website
- Communication from peak body
- Word of mouth
- Other (select and provide details) \_\_\_\_\_

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## 10. Additional Information

If you would like to provide any supporting documents to help us understand your feedback, please email these from the same email you provided in this form or attach supporting documents to this form if you are returning your submission by mail.

All submissions on the draft Border Rivers Regional Water Strategy will be reviewed following the public exhibition period.

**Please email your completed submission and any supporting documents to:**

[regionalwater.strategies@dpie.nsw.gov.au](mailto:regionalwater.strategies@dpie.nsw.gov.au)

**Or post to:**

Regional Water Strategies  
Department of Planning, Industry and Environment  
Locked Bag 5022  
Parramatta NSW 2124

**Submissions close Wednesday 29 June 2022, 11.59pm**

Further details on all regional water strategies can be found on our website  
[www.dpie.nsw.gov.au/regional-water-strategies](http://www.dpie.nsw.gov.au/regional-water-strategies)



Thank you for your submission.