

Draft NSW Water Strategy submission form

The NSW Water Strategy will be the first 20-year water strategy for all of NSW. It will provide a blueprint to help us tackle the key challenges and opportunities for water management across the state.

For more information about the strategy or to download a copy of the strategy, please visit dpie.nsw.gov.au/nswwaterstrategy.

Your voice is important

We would like to hear your views on the draft strategy, including whether you think it identifies the right priorities, challenges, opportunities and actions.

Please provide your feedback in the submission form below and email your completed submission to nsw.waterstrategy@dpie.nsw.gov.au or post to NSW Water Strategy, Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, Locked Bag 5022, Parramatta NSW 2124 **by 28 March, 2021**.

The form will take approximately 15 minutes to complete and your response can remain anonymous if you wish (see question 1).

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

If you have any questions about making a submission, please email:

nsw.waterstrategy@dpie.nsw.gov.au

Making your submission public

We collect information about you, which may include personal information, to assess submissions in response to the department's dealings and activities, and to perform other functions required to complete the project. This information must be supplied. If you choose not to provide the requested information we may not be able to assess your submission.

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, unless you have chosen to remain anonymous.

If you would like your submission and/or feedback to be kept confidential, please let us know when making your submission. You will be asked for your confidentiality preference at question 1.

If you request that your submission be kept confidential, it will not be published on our website or included in any relevant reports.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.

industry.nsw.gov.au/privacy

1. Information on confidentiality and privacy*

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

Yes

No

I would like my personal details to be kept confidential.

Yes

No

2. Your details

Name*

Contact phone number*

Postcode*

Email address*

Do you identify as an Aboriginal person?

Yes

No

Are you an individual or representing an organisation?*

Individual

Organisation

3. Organisation or business details

Who do you represent?

Government

Peak representative organisation

Local Water Utility

Other (please specify)

4. Draft vision

The NSW Government has developed the draft NSW Water Strategy as part of a suite of long-term strategies to maintain the resilience of the state's water services and resources over the coming decades.

The proposed vision for the draft NSW Water Strategy is sustainable water resources for thriving people, places and ecosystems, both now and for future generations.

Which aspects of water management are most important to you and your local community?

Do you support the proposed vision for the draft NSW Water Strategy?

Yes

No

Please tell us more about your response:

5. Draft objectives

The draft NSW Water Strategy sets high level objectives and principles to guide water service delivery and resource management across NSW. We have identified six core objectives which underpin the draft strategy. These are based on the *Water Management Act 2000*. They are:

- protecting public health and safety
- liveable and vibrant towns and cities
- water sources, floodplains and ecosystems protected
- cultural values respected and protected
- orderly, fair and equitable sharing of water
- contribute to a strong economy.

Which objectives are most important to you?

Please rank the objectives from most important to least important (where 1 is most important and 6 is least important).

Protecting public health and safety

Liveable and vibrant towns and cities

Water sources, floodplains and ecosystems protected

Cultural values respected and protected

Orderly, fair and equitable sharing of water

Contribute to a strong economy

Do you have any comments on any of the proposed objectives?

6. Draft guiding principles

The draft strategy also proposes seven principles to guide the long-term strategic planning for water resource management in NSW. These principles work in tandem with the draft objectives to guide development and implementation of actions.

The guiding principles are:

- healthy environments sustain social and economic outcomes
- water is a limited (although recyclable) resource
- systems thinking to optimise outcomes
- data-enabled planning and decision-making
- transparency and accountability to engender community trust
- forward thinking to build preparedness and resilience
- giving effect to Aboriginal rights and access to water.

Which principles are most important to you?

Please rank the objectives from most important to least important (where 1 is most important and 7 is least important).

Healthy environments sustain social and economic outcomes

Water is a limited (although recyclable) resource

Systems thinking to optimise outcomes

Data-enabled planning and decision-making

Transparency and accountability to engender community trust

Forward thinking to build preparedness and resilience

Giving effect to Aboriginal rights and access to water

Do you have any comments on any of the guiding principles?

7. Opportunities, challenges and actions for improved state-wide water management

The draft NSW Water Strategy outlines seven strategic priorities for action, focused on meeting the core objectives based on the *NSW Water Management Act 2000*. These strategic priorities are:

1. Build community confidence and capacity through engagement, transparency and accountability
2. Recognise Aboriginal rights and values, and increase access to and ownership of water for cultural and economic purposes
3. Improve river, floodplain and aquifer ecosystem health, and system connectivity
4. Increase resilience to changes in water availability (variability and climate change)
5. Support economic growth and resilient industries within a capped system
6. Support resilient, prosperous and liveable cities and towns
7. Enable a future focused, capable and innovative water sector.

Under each priority the draft strategy identifies several opportunities and challenges, and a total of 41 proposed actions to improve water management across the state.

Do you have any comments on the seven strategic priorities identified?

Do you have any comments on any of the proposed actions identified?

Are there any additional opportunities, risks and challenges that should be considered in the draft strategy?

What actions should be prioritised for immediate implementation and how should they be implemented?

8. Other comments

Do you have any other comments on the draft NSW Water Strategy?

9. How did you hear about the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft NSW Water Strategy?

Please select all that apply from the list below:

- Newspaper
- Radio
- Department of Planning, Industry and Environment website
- Direct email
- Social media
- Have your say NSW website
- Word of mouth
- Other (please describe)

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Thursday, 25 March 2021

Department of Planning, Industry and Environment

Draft NSW Water Strategy

Yancoal Australia Ltd (Yancoal) supports the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment's (DPIE) development of the Draft NSW Water Strategy (Draft Strategy).

Long term planning is crucial to ensure economic, environmental, social and cultural objectives can be met in the context of increasing climatic variability and potentially increasing demand for water.

Yancoal owns and operates a number of coal mines in NSW. These mines employ approximately 3,300 people directly and support local NSW communities through a diverse range of economic activity.

Water security is vital to support Yancoal's operations and directly impacts its ability to continue to contribute significantly to the local, state and national economy.

Water is a crucial input into Yancoal's operations and as a company we have implemented a range of measures to reduce demand for freshwater resources, including recycling water and using alternative sources of lower quality water such as saline groundwater.

Yancoal is committed to best practice mine water management and seeks to minimise its reliance on external raw water supply at its mining operations. Having a strategic direction for water service delivery and resource management in NSW is critical to informing Yancoal's decision-making and investment associated with NSW its operations.

Yancoal is an active member of the NSW Minerals Council (NSWMC) and supports its submission on the draft Strategy. Further to the NSWMC submission, Yancoal provides the following comment:

- **Development of a return flow policy:** the mining industry has made significant investments to improve water quality, recycle water and/or return water to systems that achieves environmental benefits and allows increased accessed by other water users.

Presently there is no way to account for the return of water by licence holders to sources be that surface or groundwater. This we believe is an oversight and should be a key component of Managed Aquifer Recharge under Priority 6 of the Strategy.

Considering that in most parts of NSW the available water is fully committed a return flows policy would benefit all water users providing security and diversifying water sources.

Implementation of a returns flow policy follows the guiding triple bottom line principle of further driving the efficient use of water between environmental and consumptive users.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Nick Cook', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Nick Cook
Water Specialist