

Media Release

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Environmental watering to build on gains from wet years

Victoria's regulated rivers will receive environmental flows in 2024-25 to continue improving conditions for native plants and animals, including birds and fish, to build on the gains from recent wet years.

The Victorian Environmental Water Holder (VEWH) today released the *Seasonal Watering Plan 2024-25* which details how environmental water will be used to build resilience in rivers and wetlands to support plants and animals ahead of the next dry period.

"High storage levels will provide good water supplies for planned environmental watering actions across Victoria in 2024-25," said Dr Sarina Loo, VEWH CEO.

"The Bureau of Meteorology is predicting below-average to average rainfall and above-average temperatures for various regions through winter 2024, but we expect forecast water availability will support planned environmental watering in all climate scenarios."

The plan outlines environmental watering actions for the 'boom and bust' cycles of floods, drought, and everything else in between for the Gippsland, central, western and northern regions of Victoria.

Targeted flows in some northern Victorian rivers, including Lower Broken Creek and Gunbower Creek, will support native fish populations to recover from the major impacts of the extended hypoxic blackwater conditions and floods in 2022-23 and early 2024.

Some wetlands will be drawn down following recent wet years to support important dry-phase waterbird feeding and plant growth across the landscape.

Other wetlands in northern Victoria, such as Kunat Kunat and Lake Elizabeth, will be topped up with environmental water to sustain native fish like the Murray hardyhead and native plants.

With environmental water availability expected to be high, the VEWH will consider selling up to 45 GL of its allocation water in the Goulburn, Murray and Campaspe systems throughout the watering year if foreseeable environmental demands can be met.

Trade will occur anytime during the 2024-25 water year.

The VEWH and waterway managers from nine catchment management authorities and Melbourne Water have engaged with Traditional Owners, technical experts and

communities to use local and specialist knowledge and experience in planning environmental watering for 2024-25.

The *Seasonal Watering Plan 2024-25* has details provided by Traditional Owners about potential cultural ecological benefits of environmental watering, such as supporting the health of culturally significant sites and animals and native plants of cultural value, including sources of traditional foods, tools and medicine.

The seasonal watering plan shows how CMAs have planned with communities to consider how environmental flows can support activities like boating, canoeing, fishing, birdwatching, camping, relaxing in nature and tourism.

“Our program works closely with people on the ground to understand how river systems operate and are valued,” Dr Loo said.

“The listening and learning from Traditional Owners, scientists and community members is a big part of developing the seasonal watering plan.”

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[Seasonal Watering Plan 2024-25 – Download the Victorian plan or regional sections](#)

[Allocation Water Trading Strategy 2024-25](#)

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