



MC23-027766

Ms Shelley Scoullar
Chair
Speak Up Campaign Inc

speakup4water@gmail.com

Dear Ms Scoullar

Thank you for your correspondence of 6 July 2023 to the Minister for the Environment and Water, the Hon Tanya Plibersek MP, about water sharing in South Australia and your ideas for water use efficiencies. Minister Plibersek has asked me to thank you for your correspondence and to reply on her behalf.

I appreciate you sharing your concerns and suggestions regarding delivering the Murray–Darling Basin Plan and in your participation in the recent public consultation seeking community ideas to deliver the Plan in full. The recently published ‘What we heard’ report provides a snapshot of the range of ideas and views that we received from the community. The report is available at dcceew.gov.au/water/policy/mdb/water-recovery/delivering-murray-darling-basin-plan.

I agree it is critical to ensure long-term sustainable outcomes for the Murray–Darling Basin. This is why the Australian Government is committed to delivering the Basin Plan in full, including 450 GL to enhance environmental outcomes. Finally completing all parts of the Basin Plan will provide certainty that our rivers and Basin communities are on a healthier and more sustainable path. In the face of an increasingly harsh climate, delivering the Basin Plan in full is more important than ever.

The agreement of Murray–Darling Basin ministers to deliver the Basin Plan in full, as announced by Minister Plibersek on 22 August 2023, is an historic and pivotal step towards putting the Basin on a healthy and sustainable path. The agreement provides additional time, options, funding and accountability measures to make sure the Basin Plan is delivered in full. The legislation necessary to implement this agreement has recently been introduced into the Australian Parliament. The agreement is available at dcceew.gov.au/water/policy/mdb/basin-plan/agreement2023.


Regarding your request for the Government of South Australia to release data on water use and water users, you may wish to raise this matter with the SA Deputy Premier and Minister for Climate, Environment and Water, the Hon Dr Susan Close MP, via email at OfficeOfTheDeputyPremier@sa.gov.au.

The principles of water sharing for the Murray River system are set out in the Murray–Darling Basin Agreement. South Australia has an entitlement of up to 1,850 GL per year, noting that during periods of low water availability South Australia’s entitlement is reduced.

Water accounting in the Basin occurs at various scales (each accounting system has a different purpose). Individual water use within a state is regulated by state allocation frameworks. These outline how much water can be used by an individual under their entitlement type or water allocation. Further information regarding South Australia's allocation frameworks can be found at www.environment.sa.gov.au.

Thank you again for bringing your concerns to the government's attention.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Marcus Finn', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Marcus Finn
Branch Head
Basins Policy and Science Branch
Water Policy Division

12 September 2023