



MEDIA RELEASE

Senator the Hon Penny Wong

Minister for Climate Change and Water

PW 67/08

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\$3.9 MILLION TO MEASURE RIVER AND WETLAND HEALTH

Minister for Climate Change and Water, Senator Penny Wong, today announced funding of \$3.9 million for projects to improve the monitoring of river and wetland health.

“Supporting healthy rivers is an important part of the Rudd Government’s long-term *Water for the Future* plan,” Senator Wong said.

“Crucial to ensuring the health of our rivers and wetlands is accurate and nationally consistent information about them.

“This funding will help broaden the use of the Framework for the Assessment of River and Wetland Health - a national reporting system developed to overcome a lack of comparable data on river and wetland health.”

Senator Wong said the funding would support four projects under the National Water Commission’s Raising National Water Standards program.

The projects are:

- \$1.9 million to advance river health monitoring in the wet and dry tropics of northern Australia (Western Australia, Northern Territory and Queensland).
- \$1.2 million to help apply the framework to other existing river health monitoring programs in Western Australia.
- \$600,000 to align the monitoring of New South Wales wetlands with national requirements – including significant Murray-Darling Basin wetlands at Narran Lakes, Macquarie Marshes and Gwydir Wetlands, as well as the lower Murrumbidgee wetlands and the Paroo wetland complex.
- \$210,000 to establish a high-level National Technical Steering Committee of independent scientific experts to guide the national coordination of all Framework for Assessment of River and Wetland Health projects.

Further information on these and other Raising National Water Standards projects is available from www.nwc.gov.au/agwf/rnws/rnws_projects.cfm