



Australian Government

WATER for the FUTURE

First release of Commonwealth water for the environment

Four sites in South Australia will receive the first Commonwealth water for the environment, purchased through the Australian Government's water buyback program, *Restoring the Balance in the Murray-Darling Basin*.

All sites are located on or near the River Murray. Chowilla Floodplain, Katarapko Floodplain, Paiwalla Wetland and Rocky Gully will receive water over the next few weeks.

The sites were selected by the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder (CEWH) based on proposals put forward by jurisdictions and after receiving advice from the Environmental Water Scientific Advisory Committee.

South Australia will manage the watering at each site and undertake the monitoring of the ecological responses.



Chowilla Horseshoe, Chowilla Floodplain. (M. Mohell & DEWHA)

Chowilla Floodplain

The Chowilla floodplain is north of Renmark and on the SA/NSW border. Chowilla is an icon site of *The Living Murray* Initiative and part of the Riverland Ramsar site. It contains large areas of River Red Gum, Black Box woodland and diverse wetland habitats.

The drought and reduced River Murray flows have resulted in the decline in ecological health and the death of mature River Red Gums. The remaining River Red Gums and understorey vegetation are threatened by depletion of soil moisture and underlying saline groundwater, jeopardising habitats for a diverse range of animals.

The Commonwealth is providing 286 ML (megalitres, i.e. million litres) to four locations on the Chowilla floodplain. In addition, the South Australian Government will provide 350 ML to another site at Chowilla.

Water for the Future is a long-term plan to secure the water supply for all Australians. The Government is investing \$12.9 billion over 10 years to address four key priorities:

- Taking action on climate change
- Using water wisely
- Securing water supplies
- Supporting healthy rivers

Katarapko Floodplain

The Commonwealth will provide water to the Carpark Lagoons on the Katarapko floodplain which is located in the River Murray National Park, near Berri. Katarapko is a diverse floodplain and wetland habitat for a range of aquatic and terrestrial animals. It is also the site of a river rehabilitation project, known as Katfish reach, a collaborative project between the Murray-Darling Basin Authority, the local community and South Australian Government agencies.

The Carpark Lagoons will receive 200 ML of Commonwealth water. The Carpark Lagoons are some of the last wetlands in the area with living mature Red Gums. Watering will aim to prevent the death of these trees.



Carpark Lagoons, Katarapko Floodplain, River Murray National Park. (M. Mohell & DEWHA)



Paiwalla Wetland. (M. Mohell & DEWHA)

Rocky Gully

Rocky Gully is in the Mannum-Wellington region of the River Murray. Rocky Gully is one of the last remaining refuge sites in the Murray-Darling Basin for the Murray hardyhead, a threatened species listed under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act 1999*. It is also an important habitat for waterbirds, frogs, macroinvertebrates and other native fish.

The site has been allocated 80 ML of Commonwealth water to help maintain the wetland and the fish and wildlife populations.



Rocky Gully, Murray Bridge. (M. Mohell & DEWHA)

FUTURE WATERING

Further announcements of watering events in other states in the Basin will be announced over the next few months.

MORE INFORMATION

For more information about the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder and environmental watering call **1800 218 478** or visit: www.environment.gov.au/water/environmental/cewh

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