



The Australian Government has approved 12 projects under the *Green Precincts Fund* which will save an estimated total of 142 megalitres of water and over 9,271,659 kilowatt-hours of energy per year. This will result in a reduced burden on potable water supplies and a substantial reduction in annual greenhouse gas emissions. The projects will implement a range of innovative technologies including solar energy systems, wind turbines, cogeneration energy systems, harvesting rainwater and stormwater, and the treatment and reuse of blackwater on site.

The *Green Precincts Fund* is an Australian Government initiative to prepare Australia for a future with less water and to encourage local communities to better manage their water and energy use for present and future generations.

All projects are due for completion by June 2012. There are no future funding rounds planned at this time.

#### **Green Precincts Fund - Greening the Wharf - Sydney Theatre Company**

**Recipient:** Sydney Theatre Company, Walsh Bay, NSW  
**Funding:** \$1.2 million

**Annual savings:**

Water: 1.5ML    Energy: 624,000kWh  
CO<sub>2</sub> emissions: 555 tonnes

The **Greening the Wharf** project will transform the iconic heritage listed Sydney Theatre Company building in Walsh Bay, Sydney Harbour. This high-profile and unique project demonstrates that even heritage buildings can become more sustainable.

Key initiatives of the **Greening the Wharf** project include:

- installing Pluto photovoltaic cells for electricity generation. These high-efficiency, low cost solar cells were developed by the University of NSW and China's Suntech Power from the University's world record-holding PERL silicon solar cell technology,
- energy efficiency measures including lighting and building management system upgrades - which will reduce Sydney Theatre Company's carbon emissions by 555 tonnes a year,
- an innovative rainwater harvesting, storage and reticulation system, which will supply 100 per cent of the Company's non-potable water requirements.

These measures will provide real targets for reducing energy and water use. Over the next 25 years it is estimated this project will save 37.5 million litres of water.



**Artistic Directors of Sydney Theatre Company, Cate Blanchett and Andrew Upton, with Mrs Vivienne Shi, Senator Wong and Minister Garrett, in front of Pluto photovoltaic cells for electricity generation. (DEWHA)**

#### **Green Precincts Fund - Charleston Road Campus Redevelopment**

**Recipient:** Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE, Bendigo, Victoria  
**Funding:** \$724,289

**Annual Savings:**

Water: 1.7ML    Energy: 429,928 kWh  
CO<sub>2</sub> emissions: 524 tonnes

The **Charleston Road Campus Redevelopment** project will integrate energy and water efficiency measures, showcasing a model of best-practice in sustainability for the region.

Key initiatives of the project include:

- a geothermal heating and cooling system for two new buildings, the first of its kind in the area,
- installing photovoltaic panels to generate 12,000 kWh of electricity a year,
- installing sophisticated light controls, solar lighting and solar hot water,
- installing 300,000 litre storage tanks to collect rainwater for irrigation and horticulture,
- connecting to the existing Coliban recycled water stream to supply recycled water for toilets and other non-potable water needs,
- installation of water and energy efficient fittings,
- incorporating passive design elements such as insulation and double glazing to minimise the new buildings' heat losses and gains, and

- incorporating clerestory and other windows in the design of common areas and classrooms to maximise the use of natural daylight.

Installing the geothermal system will create a local knowledge base in its design, construction and operation, and will help other regional projects set up similar systems.

As a tertiary educational facility, the project will educate and engage students in the design and installation of water and energy efficiency technologies, enabling graduates to take this knowledge and experience to future projects. The educational facilities will help drive a cultural change regarding sustainability and responsible living.

ML = Megalitres kWh = kilowatt hours

#### More information

*Green Precincts Fund*: [www.environment.gov.au/water/policy-programs/green-precincts/](http://www.environment.gov.au/water/policy-programs/green-precincts/)

*Water for the Future*: [www.environment.gov.au/water](http://www.environment.gov.au/water)

For further information on the *Green precincts Fund* you can email [greenprecincts@environment.gov.au](mailto:greenprecincts@environment.gov.au) or call 1800 218 478.



**Announcement of Green Precinct funding at the Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE, Charleston Rd Campus Redevelopment (DEWHA)**

## CSIRO study on water availability in Northern Australia released

A major scientific project on the water resources of northern Australia has reported that, contrary to popular perceptions that the region has a surplus of water, rainfall is highly seasonal and there are significant constraints on the viability of storing surface water.

The **Northern Australia Sustainable Yields** project found that northern Australia receives an average 1,077,000 billion litres of rainfall each year. However, rainfall is highly seasonal, with 95 per cent falling in five months of each year.

Assessment of water resources under current and future climate scenarios found that the future is likely to be drier.

This project provides the first consistent, robust and transparent assessment of water resources across the three jurisdictions of northern Australia, including an assessment of possible future climate implications.

The report, released by the Hon Dr Mike Kelly, Parliamentary Secretary for Water at the RiverSymposium in Brisbane this month was commissioned by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in March 2008 as part of an extension of the CSIRO work on sustainable yields and water availability that had been completed in the catchments of the Murray-Darling Basin (MDB). CSIRO is working on two further reports, for south-west Western Australia and Tasmania.

These studies are designed to provide the best available scientific information to help build a consistent analytical framework for water policy decisions across the nation.

Like the MDB report, the northern Australia report assessed surface water and groundwater resources based on four climate scenarios using results from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

The research was undertaken by CSIRO's *Water for a Healthy Country Flagship*. It paints a picture of an extremely seasonal climate with high year-to-year variability in rainfall and consistently high average evaporation rates.

The study area covered 1,247,000 square km stretching from Broome in the west to Cairns in the east. The study area's varied topography and vegetation includes harsh, dry escarpments and tablelands in the west, arid scrub to the far south, low-lying, river flood plains, especially around the Gulf of Carpentaria, and the hills of the Great Dividing Range to the east where small areas of rainforest are found.

The area's wetlands range from lakes, mangroves, saline coastal flats, and swamps, including a number of internationally significant wetlands such as Kakadu National Park.

Rainfall is concentrated near the coast where there are few opportunities for large storages or diversions. High temperatures and very high evaporation result in a landscape that is annually water-limited.

Most rivers, and the catchments they support, have a largely unimpeded flow, due to little or no regulation.

The few perennial reaches of rivers that exist in the north have high environmental, social, cultural and developmental value. Their flow is maintained through the dry season by a few point discharges of groundwater. If disrupted, their value would be at risk.

Floods are essential to sustain ecosystems in northern Australia. The actual consequences of water flow changes on ecological systems, however, are largely unknown.

The report noted that there are few opportunities for surface water storage and, in some regions, significant constraints on the viability of surface water storages. It also found there is little potential for managed aquifer recharge, or increased groundwater storage, across the project area.

Shallow groundwater provides opportunities for development, but its dynamic behaviour means there are risks of impacting local streamflow. Groundwater recharge is complex and not always directly proportional to the amount of rainfall.

Groundwater travels much slower than surface water. Responses to any change will be measured in years not days. The Great Artesian Basin aquifers may support further development, though safe extraction levels have not yet been determined.



**Water availability assessments were carried out for parts of key catchments, but were not possible throughout, due to a general paucity of quality data.**  
(Alligator River - S Greenaway & DEWHA)



**The study area covered 1,247,000 square km stretching from Broome in the west to Cairns in the east. Pictured is the East Alligator River in Kakadu National Park.**  
(S Greenaway & DEWHA)

The research found that the climate of the past decade does not reflect the historical variability, nor the possible range, of future conditions. Global climate models, based on higher future temperatures, suggest future rainfall will be similar to historical averages and potential evaporation will be slightly higher.

The project identified gaps in information and knowledge for water resource accounting, particularly in important headwaters and floodplains, with no information available for groundwater across large areas. Water availability assessments were carried out for parts of key catchments, but were not possible throughout, due to a general paucity of quality data.

The **Northern Australia Sustainable Yields** project is part of the Australian Government's Northern Australia Water Futures Assessment (NAWFA), a five-year program to develop an enduring knowledge base to inform decisions about protection and development of Northern Australia's water resources, such that any development proceeds in an ecologically, culturally and economically sustainable manner.

More information about the project and its reports can be found at:

<http://www.environment.gov.au/water/policy-programs/sustainable-yields/index.html>

## Strengthening our Basin Communities

*Water for the Future* is Australia's biggest and most ambitious program to help our cities and towns, irrigators and rural communities prepare and adapt for a drier future.

The *Strengthening Basin Communities* program has been established to help communities in the Murray-Darling Basin plan for a future with less water as Australia continues to face the challenge of drought and climate change.

Encouraging local governments and water service providers in the Murray-Darling Basin to plan for and design water saving initiatives is the key to the survival of the Basin.

*Strengthening Basin Communities* is providing \$200 million to support these outcomes through two program components.

*Stage One – Planning* encouraged submissions that assessed the risks and implications associated with climate change, with a particular focus on water availability and reviewed existing local government plans or developed new plans to take account of these risks and implications. The application period for this program closed on 21 August 2009.

*Stage Two – Water Saving Initiatives* is currently open to submissions and will support projects in the Murray-Darling Basin that improve urban water security through water savings initiatives that will reduce demand on potable water supplies by:

- Reducing water loss in distribution systems
- Reducing potable water use, and/or
- Providing 'fit for purpose' water that can replace potable water.

*Stage Two* encourages local government bodies and urban water service providers in the Murray-Darling Basin to apply for funding either as individual councils, a consortium of local governments, or an established regional organisation of councils.

To be eligible for funding, a proposed project must:

- Be located in a city or town within the Murray-Darling Basin
- Have total costs of at least \$500,000
- Be part of, or support, the long-term water supply plan for the city or town, and
- Be completed by 30 June 2012.



The *Strengthening Basin Communities* program has been established to help communities in the Murray-Darling Basin plan for a future with less water as Australia continues to face the challenge of drought and climate change. (J Baker & DEWHA)

Eligible activities may include, but are not limited to:

- Recycling and reuse
- Leakage and pressure reduction
- Smart metering
- Efficient urban irrigation technologies
- Development and implementation of a demand management program within the funding period
- Developed grant arrangements, which may include consolidated proposals for multiple community facilities such as installation of rainwater tanks and greywater systems
- Stormwater capture and reuse schemes
- Desalination, and
- Water sensitive urban design initiatives.

**Applications must be received by 6 November 2009,** and funding is capped at 50 per cent of total project costs, with a minimum of \$250,000 and a maximum of \$10 million (GST exclusive).

Guidelines are available from [www.environment.gov.au/water/programs/basin-communities/index.html](http://www.environment.gov.au/water/programs/basin-communities/index.html)

For more information phone 1800 218 478 (toll free) or email [SBC@environment.gov.au](mailto:SBC@environment.gov.au)

## National Centres of Excellence in Desalination and Water Recycling

A key component of the Australian Government's \$1 billion *National Urban Water and Desalination Plan* and as part of an election commitment to tackle urban water issues, the National Centre of Excellence for Desalination in Perth and National Centre of Excellence in Water Recycling in Brisbane are being established.

The two centres will boost the ongoing work in developing and commercialising new water technologies and help to ensure there are sustainable future water supplies across Australia. The Government has committed \$20 million over five years for each centre.

These centres will have strong involvement from industry and Australian universities to optimise and adapt new technology for Australian circumstances, expand on research for better water use and find ways to efficiently and affordably reduce the carbon footprint of technologies.

### National Centre of Excellence in Desalination - hosted by Murdoch University, Perth:

The National Centre of Excellence in Desalination will be the first of its kind in Australia. In establishing the centre, a number of long-term research goals have been identified including leading and coordinating national research in energy efficient desalination technology, building national capacity and capabilities in desalination and advancing the science of desalination with specific application to Australia's unique circumstances.

The centre is currently developing a research framework aimed at attracting national and international research expertise. This framework will facilitate the engagement of research leaders and industry in commercially-focused developments to build the national capacity and capability in desalination technologies and innovation.

Priority themes will be adopted that intersect with technologies currently utilised in commercial desalination facilities (reverse osmosis membrane desalination; thermal desalination; and, electrodialysis and ion exchange). These themes aim to optimise and adapt desalination technology for use in Australia's unique circumstances, develop suitable technologies for use in rural and regional areas and to reduce the carbon footprint of desalination facilities and technologies. The centre will also work with the emerging trends and technologies in current desalination research and development.



Pilot plant for the Centre of Excellence in water recycling in Brisbane. (Photo: Western Corridor Recycled Water)

### National Centre of Excellence in Water Recycling - hosted by Western Corridor Recycled Water Pty Ltd:

The National Centre of Excellence in Water Recycling in Brisbane will become the pre-eminent research centre in Australia in the water recycling arena. Technology, efficiency and adaptation, risk analysis and management, social and economic challenges and sustainability have been identified as the four main research themes for the centre and align with Australian Government's *Water for the Future* plan.

A number of key priorities that fit within one or more research themes will encourage research organisations and industry to develop recycled water technologies, promote Australia's expertise in this field and attract international interest in the centre. It will provide skills and training to facilitate the acceptance of alternative water sources within the Australian society, encourage job creation in the water recycling sector and drive a national focus on addressing rural and urban water recycling.

The Centre will look at a wide range of water recycling options including membrane and non-membrane technologies, large and small-scale schemes and the full range of fit-for-purpose water quality designs.

*\* It should be noted that the themes/goals/objectives for the Centre's of Excellence may change as the Centre's establish and at such times where their Board's deliberate over the suitability of the identified objectives/themes/goals.*

## Hundreds gather for 12th International Riversymposium

Hundreds of people from across Australia and overseas gathered for the 12th International Riversymposium in Brisbane in September to discuss a range of topical issues confronting communities, businesses and governments managing water resources and environmental water needs.

The event, held from 21-24 September at the Brisbane Convention Centre, included dozens of exhibitions from different sectors and states.

The Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts (DEWHA) co-sponsored two sessions looking at environmental matters and Indigenous water issues in northern Australia.

Parliamentary Secretary for Water, Dr Mike Kelly AM, MP released the Northern Australia Sustainable Yields (NASY) Report on 21 September at one of these sessions. Dr Kelly was accompanied by CSIRO NASY Project Leader Dr Richard Cresswell and CSIRO *Water for a Healthy Country* Flagship Director Dr Tom Hatton. (See separate report page 3).

The Australian Government also sponsored the National Riverprize which is offered as an incentive to further efforts to repair damaged rivers and waterways. The prize recognises outstanding achievements and excellence in river management.

This sponsorship is a five-year, \$100,000 commitment to 2012 funded through the Australian Government's *Water for the Future* initiative.

The 2009 National Riverprize was awarded to Oxley Creek Catchment Association of Brisbane for establishing outstanding industry partnerships to protect the catchment of Oxley Creek, a tributary of the Brisbane River with a catchment of around 26,000 ha, from pollution and degradation in a highly industrialised area. The prize was presented at a dinner during the Riversymposium.

Ann Clarke, representing the catchment association, said the prize recognised countless hours that members, volunteers and industry staff contributed to achieve protection of the catchment for wider community benefit.

"It is a wonderful endorsement of our strategy and our success, and a proud moment for everyone involved," she said.



DEWHA, National Water Commission and Land & Water Australia stand at the 12th International Riversymposium (DEWHA)

## Smart Approved WaterMark across Australia

Around the home, the Smart Approved WaterMark is now firmly established as a national symbol for water saving.

The sister scheme to Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards (WELS), the Smart WaterMark has been two years in the consumer marketplace, after launching with a base of 120 products and services in October 2007.

Now the list has grown to over 180 covering products such as pool covers, greywater systems, waterless car washes, garden mulches and irrigation systems. Services include Sydney Water's 'Love your Garden' and 'Plant Selector' and the WA Water Corporation's 'Waterwise Plants for Perth Gardens' scheme.

Under the direction of CEO Julian Gray, the scheme has developed Memorandums of Understanding with water utilities in Australian states and territories and in most cases it is now written into their demand management programs.

The scheme aligns with the National Water Initiative and has the support of the Australian Government with funding of \$1.8 million through the *Water Smart Australia Program*.

The independent 'tick' of the Smart WaterMark is being supported by promotion to consumers at shows and events, through ongoing advertising and public relations and a comprehensive consumer website [www.smartwatermark.org](http://www.smartwatermark.org)

The use of interactive calculators for people to pledge watersaving through the installation of water tanks, swimming pool covers or using waterless car washes is proving popular with the website counter showing steady increases every day.

A second website, [www.smartwatermark.info](http://www.smartwatermark.info) serves stakeholders and industry to keep track of guidelines, research and other information relevant to them about the Smart WaterMark.

One of the key aspects to the success and acceptance of the Mark nationally has been the rigorous assessment process of the Smart WaterMark Expert Technical Panel which includes representatives from different water use sectors such as the nursery/horticultural industry, irrigation/landscape industry, plumbing industry and the training and education sector.

The panel assesses each product or service on the basis of four main criteria. The obvious one is water saving, but it needs to be clearly shown that actual use is reduced and/or water is used more efficiently, with a direct correlation between the use of the product and water savings. The other criteria are 'fit for purpose', 'meets regulations and standards' and is 'environmentally sustainable'.

The scheme has also identified a need for water saving accreditation in the commercial sector and already has a number of products that cross over between consumer and commercial markets. In response to the interest, it is now broadening its scope to include more commercial products and services.

If you would like more information about Smart Approved WaterMark, call Julian Gray, ph 02 92233322 or go to [www.smartwatermark.info](http://www.smartwatermark.info)



## Water Smart Australia, Mackay Wastewater Recycling Project, Queensland

### The project

This project recycles most of Mackay's wastewater to better protect the Great Barrier Reef from 250 tonnes of nutrients entering the system every year. The project will also protect and rehabilitate an overcommitted ground water resource that is at risk of seawater intrusion.

Under the project an existing wastewater treatment plant has been decommissioned. Wastewater is being redirected to an upgraded plant and up to 90 per cent of treated effluent will be used for irrigation in nearby sugar cane farms. This treated wastewater will reduce the stress on an overused groundwater resource. The project is a partnership between the Australian and Queensland Governments and Mackay Regional Council and is a practical on-the-ground water solution that will make a significant contribution to the outcomes of the National Water Initiative.

### Funding

The Australian Government contributed \$45.54 million (plus GST) from the *Water Smart Australia Program*, and the Queensland Government and Mackay Regional Council contributed \$89.46 million towards the Mackay South Water Recycling Facility.

A further \$20 million of funding was provided by the Queensland Government and Mackay Regional Council for the Mackay North Water Treatment Facility, to bring total costs for the Mackay Wastewater Recycling project to \$155 million.



One of the Project's recycled water irrigation dams (Photo: Mackay Regional Council)

### Project benefits

Mackay is a gateway to the Great Barrier Reef, the largest sugar producing area in Australia, and a vital service centre for the mines of the nearby Bowen Basin. Water Conservation measures apply to most of the city, and with a population growing at greater than the Queensland average, demands for water will continue to increase.

It is forecast that the city's population will reach 120,000 by 2021. Tourism is also an important part of life in Mackay. This project will help to protect the Great Barrier Reef one of the natural wonders of the world from harmful nutrients entering coastal waters near Mackay. This will ensure that current and future generations can continue to enjoy this magnificent reef system. Through wastewater recycling for the irrigation of sugarcane, this project will reduce the demand on groundwater by 8,500 megalitres per year.

This project demonstrates how water solutions can increase the productivity of Australia's water use, while also servicing the needs of rural and urban communities and ensuring the health of our river and groundwater systems. This project is the largest regional reuse scheme of its type in Australia.

The project advances the National Water Initiative objective of encouraging reuse and recycling.

### Project completion

The Mackay South Bakers Creek Water Treatment Plant was opened by the Prime Minister on 23 July 2009.

*Water Smart Australia* projects are funded by the Australian Government's framework, *Water for the Future*. Further information on the *Water Smart Australia Program* is available at: <http://www.environment.gov.au/water/policy-programs/water-smart/index.html>

## Mackay Wastewater Recycling Project

**The new system reduces stress on groundwater by recycling 88% of Mackay's wastewater (on a 10 year rolling scale average).**

**250 tonnes of nutrients will be prevented from entering the Great Barrier Reef every year, and overcommitted groundwater resources at risk of seawater intrusion will be rehabilitated.**

**Australian Government Water Fund**  
Water Smart Australia

**Queensland Government**  
Natural Resources and Water

**MACKAY**  
WATER

## Do you have an interesting story about a wetland in your region?

The 2010 Wetlands Australia – National Wetlands Update, is an annual publication bringing together information and resources from across Australia relating to wetlands conservation, management and education.

Contributed articles are welcome for consideration in the 2010 Wetlands Australia – National Wetlands Update. Articles could cover environmental issues (as the 2010 issue is themed “climate change”), the latest scientific research, and conservation success stories. The aim is to include all states and territories and all wetland types.

If you would like to contribute (500-1000 words by 12<sup>th</sup> October), please contact Georgia Curry on 02 4473 8880, 0402 202 836 or [georgiacurry@yahoo.com.au](mailto:georgiacurry@yahoo.com.au)

For past issues of Wetlands Australia visit: <http://www.environment.gov.au/water/publications/environmental/wetlands/wa17.html>

## WetlandCare Australia National Art and Photography Competition 2010

To celebrate World Wetlands Day 2010, an international event proclaimed by the United Nations, WetlandCare Australia has organised an Australia-wide Art and Photography competition offering categories for children and adults.

We are seeking works on paper exploring the theme of Wetlands, Biodiversity and Climate Change. Closing date for entries is 4<sup>th</sup> December 2009.

The competition is acquisitive, with the winning works to be used by WetlandCare Australia to promote wetlands and the work of WetlandCare Australia.

Entry forms are available at [www.wetlandcare.com.au](http://www.wetlandcare.com.au)



(Photo: Peter Canty)

## Announcements

### **Public consultation on Darling River Water Savings Project - 29 September 2009**

Public information sessions will be held this week at Wentworth, Menindee and Broken Hill to update the community on the Darling River Water Savings Project, which aims to reduce the amount of water lost through evaporation from Menindee Lakes.

<http://www.environment.gov.au/minister/wong/2009/mr20090929.html>

### **Funding Announced under the Green Precincts Fund for four demonstration sites:**

Heron Island - <http://www.environment.gov.au/minister/wong/2009/mr20090918a.html>

Sydney Harbour Federation Trust - <http://www.environment.gov.au/minister/wong/2009/mr20090919.html>

Launceston City Council - <http://www.environment.gov.au/minister/wong/2009/mr20090922.html>

Australian National University - <http://www.environment.gov.au/minister/garrett/2009/mr20090923.html>

### **Further consultation on accreditation under water charge rules - 17 September 2009**

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) has been asked to provide further advice on rules for accreditation as part of the water infrastructure charge rules.

<http://www.environment.gov.au/minister/wong/2009/mr20090917.html>

### **Rudd Government welcomes Victoria's removal of 10 per cent cap on water trade - 15 September 2009**

The Victorian 10 per cent limit on the amount of water that can be owned separately from land in individual water supply areas has been removed.

<http://www.environment.gov.au/minister/wong/2009/mr20090915b.html>

### **Funding for Living Murray Environmental works - 3 September 2009**

The internationally recognised Hattah Lakes near Mildura will receive more than \$20 million in new environmental works to help bring water to areas of Redgum, Black box and Lignum that are struggling under the current drought. Subject to environmental, planning and other approvals, the proposed works will include a permanent pumping station, levees and regulators to manage flows within the lakes.

<http://www.environment.gov.au/minister/wong/2009/mr20090903a.html>

### **\$30 million scheme launched to cut Murray salinity and boost wetland health - 3 September 2009**

Minister for Climate Change and Water, Senator Penny Wong, and South Australian Minister for the River Murray Karlene Maywald launched the construction of a \$30 million scheme to keep salt out of the Murray in SA's Riverland region. The salt interception scheme, to be built at Murtho near Renmark, will stop an estimated 99.4 tonnes of salt a day (or 36,000 tonnes a year) from entering the river and will boost the ecological health of the nearby Riverland Ramsar wetland site.

<http://www.environment.gov.au/minister/wong/2009/mr20090903.html>

### **Low flows initiative to improve river management - 2 September 2009**

The Government has provided \$700,000 in research funding to improve knowledge and management of low river flows. Given the impacts of climate change in southern Australia, understanding and managing low flows will play an increasingly critical role in sustaining healthy and productive river systems.

<http://www.environment.gov.au/minister/wong/2009/mr20090902c.html>

### **Call for water-saving projects for basin communities - 2 September 2009**

The Rudd Government is seeking proposals from local government bodies and urban water service providers in the Murray-Darling Basin for water-saving initiatives to help their communities prepare for a future with less water. Basin communities are invited to submit proposals for water-saving initiatives as part of the Rudd Government's \$200 million Strengthening Basin Communities program.

<http://www.environment.gov.au/minister/wong/2009/mr20090902b.html>

### **\$1.5 million to assess climate change impacts on groundwater - 2 September 2009**

The Rudd Government will provide \$1.5 million for a project to help water managers better understand the expected impacts of climate change on Australian groundwater resources.

<http://www.environment.gov.au/minister/wong/2009/mr20090902a.html>

### **Water Minister and Parliamentary Secretary to tour southern Murray-Darling Basin - 1 September 2009**

Minister for Climate Change and Water, Senator Penny Wong, and Parliamentary Secretary for Water, Dr Mike Kelly, visit the southern parts of the Murray-Darling Basin to meet irrigators, farmers, catchment management authorities and local government representatives to discuss water management issues.

<http://www.environment.gov.au/minister/wong/2009/mr20090901.html>

**New project to deliver recycled water to Barossa vineyards - 31 August 2009**

The Water Reuse Project - a partnership between Barossa Infrastructure Ltd and the Barossa Council at Nurioopta - has been supported with \$599,000 of Australian Government funding from the Water Smart Australia program.

<http://www.environment.gov.au/minister/wong/2009/mr20090831.html>

**Urban water usage down, industry report card shows - 19 August 2009**

Water Services Association of Australia (WSAA) Report Card 2008-2009 has been launched, showing that water consumption in residential Australia dropped by 12 per cent over the previous financial year.

<http://www.environment.gov.au/minister/kelly/2009/mr20090819.html>

**\$20 million to boost water information - 18 August 2009**

More than 100 new projects will share in \$20 million to improve the collection, management and sharing of water information across Australia. The \$20 million will support some 115 new projects to modernise and extend water information networks and systems in both urban and rural areas.

<http://www.environment.gov.au/minister/wong/2009/mr20090818.html>

**\$724,000 Green Precincts funding for Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE - 14 August 2009**

A high-profile Bendigo project demonstrating innovative water and energy saving initiatives will receive \$724,000 in Rudd Government funding.

<http://www.environment.gov.au/minister/wong/2009/mr20090814b.html>

**Host named for new Water Recycling Centre of Excellence - 14 August 2009**

Western Corridor Recycled Water Pty Ltd will receive \$20 million over five years to host the National Centre of Excellence in Water Recycling in Brisbane.

<http://www.environment.gov.au/minister/wong/2009/mr20090814.html>

**\$1.45 million to boost Lachlan irrigators' on-farm water savings - 12 August 2009**

Irrigators in the Lachlan Catchment of New South Wales will benefit from \$1.45 million in funding to improve the efficiency of their infrastructure and practices as they prepare for a future with less water.

<http://www.environment.gov.au/minister/wong/2009/mr20090812a.html>

**Strong results on government water purchase - 24 July 2009**

In total to June 30 this year, the Rudd Government has secured the purchase of some 446 billion litres of water worth \$660 million as part of a water buyback designed to put the Murray-Darling Basin back on a sustainable footing.

<http://www.environment.gov.au/minister/wong/2009/mr20090724a.html>