

Murray-Darling Basin Plan — Buying 2,075 GL/yr of Water Back for the River, With Mixed Ecological Results (Australia)

PES & Nature-Based Solutions · Good practice · Australia

Quality score: 33/100

Evidence strength: Cautionary / limited

Summary

Australia's statutory Basin Plan has recovered about 2,073 GL/yr of surface water for the environment (MDBA, June 2026), but only after the 2,750 GL target was cut to 2,075 GL; the 2025 evaluation finds local waterbird and wetland gains while native fish remain poor.

Key dimensions

Dimension	Score
Carbon — sequestration / storage, evidenced	0/3
Biodiversity — conservation / improvement, evidenced	1/3
Water & soil — retention, infiltration, erosion control	2/3
Fire resilience — risk reduction, evidenced	0/3
Governance, certification & transferability	2/3

Evaluated by C-NAPSE

Data sources

[C-NAPSE web research](#) — accessed 2026-10-19

[Murray–Darling Basin Authority \(MDBA\) / Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder](#) — accessed 2026-10-19

[MDBA – progress on water recovery](#) — accessed 2026-10-19

[MDBA – 2025 Basin Plan Evaluation](#) — accessed 2026-10-19

[MDBA – Summary of the 2025 Sustainable Rivers Audit](#) — accessed 2026-10-19

[Global Water Forum – independent assessment of the State of the Basin](#) — accessed 2026-10-19

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