

Restoring the upper Murrumbidgee River Program

FEDERATION FUNDING AGREEMENT – ENVIRONMENT

Table 1: Formalities and operation of Schedule															
Parties	Commonwealth New South Wales (NSW) Australian Capital Territory (ACT)														
Duration	This Schedule is expected to expire on 30 June 2029.														
Purpose	<p>This Schedule will support the delivery of the Restoring the upper Murrumbidgee River Program (the Program).</p> <p>The program activities funded under this Schedule will improve river health, environmental outcomes and water quality of the upper Murrumbidgee River by investing in on-ground works and supporting new science and monitoring.</p> <p>Implementation of the Program will be consistent with the strategic objectives, guiding Principles and outcomes of the <i>Improving the Health of the Upper Murrumbidgee: Strategy (the Strategy)</i>.</p> <p>Funding will be provided to NSW and ACT to implement agreed projects in the upper Murrumbidgee River that address the decline in river health and water quality and improve habitat for endangered and native aquatic species. Funding will also support research and monitoring projects, and projects that improve knowledge, community education and engagement.</p> <p>The upper Murrumbidgee River is defined as the main Murrumbidgee River channel upstream of Lake Burrinjuck and downstream of Tantangara Dam.</p>														
Estimated financial contributions	<p>The Commonwealth will provide a total financial contribution to the states and territories of up to \$20.26 million in respect of this Schedule.</p> <p>Details of estimated financial contributions by the Commonwealth and others in respect of this Schedule are set out in the tables below and the relevant Appendices to this Schedule.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Table 1 (\$ million)</th> <th>2024-25</th> <th>2025-26</th> <th>2026-27</th> <th>2027-28</th> <th>2028-29</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Estimated total budget</td> <td>5.0</td> <td>7.26</td> <td>6.0</td> <td>1.0</td> <td>1.0</td> <td>20.26</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Table 1 (\$ million)	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	Total	Estimated total budget	5.0	7.26	6.0	1.0	1.0	20.26
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Asset Ownership	<p>Any assets being constructed or modified as part of projects outlined in this Schedule must already have existing asset ownership arrangements in place. The Commonwealth will not acquire any assets nor accept any liability for any operations, maintenance or recurrent costs from works undertaken or associated with any of the projects outlined in this Schedule.</p>																					
Governance Arrangements	<p>A governance structure will comprise of Commonwealth, NSW and ACT representatives and be responsible for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) developing joint Program Plans to guide consistent Program implementation across jurisdictions, including but not limited to science and monitoring, communication and engagement and First Nations participation and engagement; b) providing ongoing strategic direction and guidance for implementation of approved Projects; and c) considering Project Work Plans ahead of Commonwealth approval. <p>A Terms of Reference for the governance structure will be developed and agreed between the Parties.</p>																					
Work Plans	<p>Projects to be delivered under this Schedule will be detailed in Project Work Plans (PWP) which are to be agreed between the state/territory senior official and the responsible Commonwealth senior official.</p> <p>NSW and ACT senior officials will each provide the Commonwealth with PWPs in line with the minimum requirements set out in Attachment 1 and performance milestones in Appendix A3.</p> <p>The Commonwealth will approve the PWP subject to the criteria at Attachment 2 being met.</p> <p>Annual variations to PWPs may occur to accommodate changed circumstances, subject to agreement by the responsible Commonwealth senior official. Variations must align with the requirements set out in Attachment 1 and meet the criteria at</p>																					

	<p>Attachment 2.</p> <p>Recognising the need to commence priority activities as soon as possible, individual project proposals that meet the information requirements of Attachment 1 may be brought forward for Commonwealth early consideration ahead of finalising the PWPs. Early priority projects will be assessed based on the criteria at Attachment 2.</p> <p>Variations to agreed PWPs will be considered under the Program governance arrangements, ahead of Commonwealth approval.</p>
Recognition of Funding	<p>In addition to the requirements set out in clause 21 of the <i>FFA-Environment</i>, all Parties agree to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) recognise the Commonwealth funding contribution to projects in all publications, promotional and advertising materials including project signage, and all public announcements and activities in relation to the project as appropriate, and must consult the Commonwealth prior to the release of all promotional-related material concerning all projects funded under this Schedule; b) provide reasonable opportunity for the Commonwealth to contribute to developing communications strategies and associated materials; c) provide the Commonwealth with equal access to products obtained under this Schedule for use in the development of promotional material, including but not limited to project data, footage and images; and d) where the Commonwealth is a majority funder of the project, promotional material and public recognition, including announcements and launch events, should provide major prominence to the Commonwealth and opportunities for Commonwealth involvement.

Table 2: New South Wales – Performance requirements, reporting and payment summary			
Output (Project Streams)	Project Stream Description	Total Commonwealth contribution (up to)	Total non-Commonwealth contribution
A - On-ground river health works	Project Stream A will improve river health and water quality of the upper Murrumbidgee River through the completion of catchment and river health projects.	\$6.78m	\$0
B – Science, monitoring and program engagement	Project Stream B will improve collective understanding of the river system, water quality, environmental watering requirements and its ecological health in the upper Murrumbidgee River through science and monitoring projects. Community engagement and education activities for the program will also be delivered.	\$5.9m	\$0

The Parties have confirmed their commitment to this schedule as follows:

Signed for and on behalf of the Commonwealth of Australia by



The Honourable Tanya Plibersek MP
Minister for Environment and Water

8.9.24

Signed for and on behalf of the State of New South Wales by



The Honourable Tara Moriarty MLC
Minister for Agriculture, Regional NSW and Western NSW

1/10/2024

Minimum requirements of Project Work Plans

Requirements of Project Work Plans

1. A Project Work Plan (PWP) will set out the jurisdiction specific projects to be delivered under this Schedule, for the term of the agreement. A PWP will demonstrate the outcomes to be delivered by the agreed projects in line with the objectives of the Program, the relevant Project Stream and the *Improving the Health of the Upper Murrumbidgee: Strategy (the Strategy)*.
2. NSW and ACT governments are each responsible for drafting a PWP and submitting to the Commonwealth for approval by the responsible senior official in line with performance milestones in the relevant Appendices to this Schedule.
3. At a minimum, PWPs should address the following content:
 - a. Scope, outcomes and quantifiable outputs for each project stream and demonstration of how these comply with the eligible activities set out in **Attachment 2**.
 - b. High level activity delivery schedule(s), including a list of key deliverables to be provided at milestone dates throughout the project (including any required regulatory approvals).
 - c. Monitoring, evaluation, reporting and improvement plan specific to the activities within the PWP.
 - d. Stakeholder communications and engagement plan specific to the activities within the PWP for all stakeholders including relevant First Nations and aligned with the relevant joint Program Plans.
 - e. Governance arrangements for project delivery.
 - f. Risk assessment on key program delivery risks including proposed controls or treatments to mitigate risk.
 - g. The estimated costs required to deliver program activities and the required outcomes. Costings need to be robust and defensible.
 - h. A description of how activities will be developed, including collaboration with other participating jurisdictions, and link to the Strategy, joint Program Plans and other relevant river health strategies and action plans.

Assessment Criteria for approving Project Work Plans

1. The Commonwealth will assess the draft Project Work Plans (PWP) in accordance with the assessment criteria set out below.

Assessment criteria

2. The PWP addresses the minimum requirements of PWPs as set out in **Attachment 1** and as reviewed by the relevant governance arrangements.
3. The effectiveness and efficiency of project activities to deliver the program objectives and outcomes.
4. The degree of confidence the proposed projects can be delivered within the funding timeframes.
5. Plans demonstrate collaboration between NSW and ACT and integration of activities across jurisdictions to achieve Program objectives and outcomes.
6. PWPs provide opportunity for participation and engagement of community and First Nations throughout project lifecycle.

Eligible Projects

7. Eligible projects are:
 - a. activities that occur in the Upper Murrumbidgee Program area, comprising the Murrumbidgee River, its tributaries and riparian lands upstream of Burrinjuck Dam and downstream of Tantangara Dam. The extent of riparian land shall be assessed on a case-by-case basis and agreed between the parties before proceeding.
 - b. activities that are expected to provide a measurable contribution towards the Program outcomes as set out in the Strategy.
 - c. activities that are not already funded or planned to be funded outside of this agreement by any party.
 - d. For Stream A – On-ground river health works, activities that improve the:
 - i. riverine health and instream water quality, including but not limited to erosion and fencing works, tracks and crossings, planting and revegetation activities, off-stream stock water supply, weed and willow control, grazing and pasture management in adjacent riparian lands, soil conservation works, sediment extraction investigations, feral animal control and relevant First Nations land management practices.
 - ii. health of native fish and crayfish populations and aquatic habitat including fish hotels, restocking, and other fish, aquatic biota and habitat projects, re-snagging. Prioritisation should be given to

- threatened native species (such as Silver Perch and Macquarie Perch).
 - iii. overall ecological health of the Upper Murrumbidgee catchment area.
 - iv. cultural values in the upper Murrumbidgee River and provide opportunity for First Nations community members to share and implement traditional ecological knowledge.
- e. For Stream B – Science, Monitoring and education activities:
- i. including community engagement, cross border collaboration, upskilling, stewardship, communications and awareness.
 - ii. to monitor and support evaluation of the effectiveness of agreed project interventions.
 - iii. include status and intervention monitoring of water quality, waterway health, riparian and instream vegetation, native aquatic species that may include but not limited to platypus, rakali, invertebrates, frogs, turtles, waterbirds and fish (including genetic diversity and measures to improve this), sediment, streambed and streambank dynamics, environmental water evaluation, river heights and riparian and in-stream inundation dynamics, fish passage, climate change adaptation, and other science and monitoring projects subject to agreement by the Commonwealth.
 - iv. that recognise, share and build First Nations knowledge and science on river health and monitoring including Aboriginal Waterway Assessments.
 - v. that recognise, share and build community knowledge and science on river health and restoration.
8. In addition to the eligible activities above, project coordination activities and project administration may be funded, but must not be more than 10% of the total budget for the Program.
9. State/Territories may propose additional eligible activities relevant to the project type above subject to agreement by the Commonwealth. Proposals can be made via correspondence between senior officials and must include justification of which project type they fit under and how the activity will contribute to the program objectives and outcomes.

Restoring the upper Murrumbidgee River Program

FEDERATION FUNDING AGREEMENT – ENVIRONMENT

Table A1: Formalities and operation of schedule	
Parties	Commonwealth New South Wales (NSW)
Purpose	This Appendix has been developed in accordance with Restoring the upper Murrumbidgee River Program Schedule (the Schedule), to set out the Commonwealth and NSW estimated expenditure profile and performance milestones to support the operation of the Schedule.
Estimated financial contributions	The Commonwealth will provide an estimated total financial contribution to NSW of up to \$12.68 million in respect of this Appendix as outlined in Table A2.

Table A2: Estimated financial contributions

Project Funding (\$'m)	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	Total
Estimated total budget	3.20	4.68	3.80	0.50	0.50	12.68
Less estimated National Partnership Payments	-	-	-	-	-	-
A – On-ground river health works	1.80	2.78	2.20	0.0	0.0	6.78
B – Science, monitoring and program engagement	1.40	1.90	1.60	0.50	0.50	5.90
Balance of non-Commonwealth contributions						

Table A3: New South Wales - Performance requirements, reporting and payment summary				
Output (Project Stream)	Performance milestones	Due	FY	Payment Amount (up to)
Execution of schedule	Execution of schedule	On execution of this Schedule	2024-25	\$480,000
A – On-ground river health works and B – Science, monitoring and program engagement	<p><u>Milestone 1 – Project Commencement</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acceptance by the Commonwealth of evidence of agreed joint Program Plans including but not limited to science and monitoring, communication and engagement and First Nations participation and engagement. Acceptance by the Commonwealth of a Project Work Plan (PWP) (as per Attachment 1). A summary report, as agreed by the Parties, outlining project inception and start up activities. 	30 March 2025	2024-25	\$2,720,000

Output (Project Stream)	Performance milestones	Due	FY	Payment Amount (up to)
	<p>Milestone 2 – <u>Project Status Report 1</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acceptance by the Commonwealth of a Project Status Report/s and appropriate documentation as evidence against the PWP (as per requirements at Attachment 1). The report must be completed in the template provided by the Commonwealth. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To meet progress status reporting requirements, project status reports should include an update against the PWP Activities supported by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A statement to demonstrate progress against the accepted PWP and delivery schedule supported by relevant evidence. Evidence may include, for example, completion certificates of works, photos, scientific reports, outcomes from stakeholder engagement, communication material developed, and statement of assurance from senior officials confirming the completion of projects against the PWP. ▪ Expenditure report. ▪ Identification of new or emerging risks to delivery of the Project, and management of those risks. ▪ Identify if any changes have been made or are proposed to the delivery of the project. ▪ Identify if the deliverables are on track. In case of delays, report the reason for the delay. ▪ Monitoring activities undertaken, any preliminary findings and how these findings may support adaptive management. • Acceptance by the Commonwealth of any variations to the PWP, where relevant. 	30 April 2025	2025-26	\$4,680,000
	<p>Milestone 3 – <u>Project Status Report 3</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acceptance by the Commonwealth of a Project Status Report/s and appropriate documentation as evidence to demonstrate completion of activities detailed in the agreed Project Work Plan/s (as per requirements at Attachment 1 and detailed under Milestone 2). The report must be completed in the template provided by the Commonwealth. • Acceptance by the Commonwealth of any variations to the PWP, where relevant. 	31 March 2027	2026-27	\$3,800,000

Output (Project Stream)	Performance milestones	Due	FY	Payment Amount (up to)
	<p>Milestone 4 – <u>Project Status Report 4</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acceptance by the Commonwealth of a Project Status Report/s and appropriate documentation as evidence to demonstrate completion of activities detailed in the agreed Project Work Plan/s (as per requirements at Attachment 1 and detailed under Milestone 2). The report must be completed in the template provided by the Commonwealth. Acceptance by the Commonwealth of any variations to the PWP, where relevant. 	31 March 2028	2027-28	\$500,000
	<p>Milestone 5 – <u>Evidence of Project Completion and Final Program Report</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project completion and acceptance by the Commonwealth of a Final Program Report as a stand-alone document that demonstrates all Program outcomes, benefits for the environment and community and which provides a synthesis of lessons learned. The report must be completed in the template provided by the Commonwealth. 	29 March 2029	2028-29	\$500,000