



## MDA Delegates Report

April 2022

*The Murray Darling Association (MDA) is Australia's peak body representing local government across the Murray-Darling Basin.*

*The following report should be tabled at council and provides delegates and their councils with an overview of MDA activities and engagements.*

### **A note from the Murray Darling Association CEO:**

*We have been focused on key activities to deliver desired outcomes. Following the recent Strategic Planning Workshop in Canberra, Region Chair feedback on priorities was appreciated to ensure that we are on track.*

*The conclusion of the Murray Darling Association's Basin Communities Leadership Program signals the Association's continued goal of improving water, and leadership literacy across the Murray-Darling Basin.*

*A promising development to the relationship between the Murray Darling Association and the CSIRO was heralded through a partnership to investigate and explore a series of strategic growth areas in the Circular Economy sphere, particularly in reference to the biggest land and water challenges.*

*With continued progress being made, the 78<sup>th</sup> National Conference and AGM is drawing ever closer, and with it the opportunity to join in conversation, inform future policy, and engage with innovators, representatives, and the leaders of our time!*



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## 1. Foreword

*With the successful completion of its Basin Communities leadership Program, The Murray Darling Association is making continued progress towards the goals set out by the 2021 National Conference and the Association's Vision 2025 Strategic Plan. Progress is being made in preparation of the Association's next big event; the 2022 National Conference and AGM to be held in Albury in September 2022.*

## 2. Key Meetings & Events

The below table summarises the association's key engagements with the Basin communities.

Date	Event/meeting	Location
20/1/22	Meeting with Lu Hogan – UNE	
28/1/22	Meeting with Lisa Neville Victorian Minister for Water	
4/2/22	Meeting with the One Basin CRC	Held Virtually
7/2/22	Partners Meeting – Armidale Node of the S QLD and N NSW Drought Hub	Held Virtually
10/2/22	Meeting with Michael Stewardson – Uni Melbourne	Melbourne
15/2/22	Rod Corfe - 2WEB – Radio Interview	Held Virtually
17/2/22	Meeting with Inspector-General of Water Compliance Troy Grant	
17/2/22	Meeting with Jim Bentley	
18/2/22	Legalwise 13 <sup>th</sup> Water Symposium: Spotlight on Legal and Regulatory Reforms	Sydney
23/2/22	Meeting with Dave Tonkin, Beau Hug, Sue Hyde – Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment	Canberra
24/2/22	Meeting with Hon Sussan Ley MP	Canberra
24/2/22	Meeting with Terri Butler MP – Shadow Minister for Environment & Water	Canberra
3/3/22	MRLGA Water Position Paper Working Group Meeting	Held Virtually
10/3/22	Meeting with Luke Friend DPIE	Albury
11/3/22	Meeting with Towong Shire Council	Towong
16/3/22	DPIE – Water Engagement Roundup March 2022	Held Virtually
25/3/22	Darling Downs & SW QLD Council of Mayors Meeting	Attended Virtually
21/3/22	BCLP – Rochester Workshop	Rochester
23/3/22	BCLP – Mildura Workshop	Mildura
28/3/22	BCLP – Cobdogla, Berri-Barmera Workshop	Berri-Barmera
29/3/22	BCLP – Loxton Workshop	Loxton
30/3/22	BCLP – Swan Reach Workshop	Swan Reach
31/3/22	BCLP – Lower Lakes Workshop	Goolwa
1/4/22	Water Subcommittee Meeting	Held Virtually
5/4/22	MDA – CSIRO Meeting – Circular Economy Market Analysis	Held Virtually
7/4/22	MDBA – April Peak Groups Briefing 2022	Held Virtually
8/4/22	DPIE – Regional Water Strategies – Peak Stakeholder Engagement	Held Virtually



13/4/22	MDA – CSIRO Meeting – Circular Economy Market Analysis	Held Virtually
14/4/22	MRLGA Water Position Paper Working Group Meeting	Held Virtually
20/4/22	DPIE Water Engagement roundup	Held Virtually
26/4/22	Meeting with Tallangatta Shire Council	Tallangatta
28/4/22	AlburyCity Council - Digital Community Leaders Forum	Held Virtually
6/5/22	MRLGA Water Position Paper Working Group Meeting	Held Virtually

### 3. Working towards Vision 2025

Vision 2025 is the Murray Darling Association’s five-year Strategic Plan. It sets out the association’s goals and describes the strategies we will implement to achieve them.

Vision 2025 is built upon the foundations established by the 2016-19 Strategic Plan, and confirms our place as the Basin’s primary driver in local leadership and policy development.

To view the current Strategic Plan, visit the [MDA website](#), or contact the office on [\(03\) 5480 3805](tel:0354803805)

Goal	How	Reference
Local Leadership/Leadership and Engagement	MRLGA Water Position Paper Working Group Meeting	The <a href="#">MRLGA</a> was established to work with the Local Government Association of South Australia in achieving its aims and objectives and to provide strong advocacy on what matters most to the communities of the Constituent Councils.
Science & Education	MDA-CSIRO Partnership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Circular Economy Market Analysis workshops</li> </ul>	The Murray Darling Association will be conducting workshops across NSW, QLD, VIC, and SA, engaging LGA/Councils and LG Associations such as ALGA, MAV, LGNSW, LGAQ, and LGASA [See outgoing correspondence, MDA Board Meeting 415]
Inform better government policy	MDA-CSIRO Partnership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Circular Economy Market Analysis workshops</li> </ul>	The Murray Darling Association will be conducting workshops across NSW, QLD, VIC, and SA, engaging LGA/Councils and LG Associations such as ALGA, MAV, LGNSW, LGAQ, and LGASA [See outgoing correspondence, MDA Board Meeting 415]
Exchange information & facilitate informed debate	2022 Strategic Planning Workshop <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The MDA held its Strategic Planning Workshop in Canberra in Feb 2022.</li> </ul>	The Workshop, held at the MDBA head offices, offered a unique opportunity to engage with the heads of the Authority, as well as further cement the relationship between the MDA and the CSIRO, who were invited to present to the workshop.
Engagement in policy process	1. Letters sent to Government encouraging continuation and consistency in the portfolio of Minister for Water, Property and Housing	[See Outgoing Correspondence, MDA Board Meeting 413 Minutes]



#### 4. MDA Board Meetings

The Murray Darling Association held its most recent Board Meeting on 18 March 2022. The MDA Board meet monthly for the purpose of knowledge sharing, regional development, and inter-regional collaboration.

The MDA makes all board meeting [Minutes](#) available on the MDA website.

#### 5. Region Meetings

Our 12 regions meet quarterly. Each meeting is an incredible opportunity to collaborate with councils in your region and hear from fantastic guest speakers. To find out when your next region meeting is, please contact your chair or our office on (03) 5480 3805.

To find out more about what is happening in other MDA regions, please head over to [www.mda.asn.au](http://www.mda.asn.au), where all region meeting [minutes](#) are available.

#### 6. 78th National Conference Economics, Dams, and Infrastructure

The 78<sup>th</sup> National Conference & AGM will be held in **Albury, 19-21 September 2022** at the **Albury Entertainment Centre**.



In a year where much has been disrupted and affected by COVID-19, it comes as no surprise that the towns, regions, and countries to emerge quickest and strongest are those with innovative, connected local leadership.

This can be said doubly so for local government and the communities of the Murray Darling Basin. Basin councils have, after all, spent years building connections, infrastructure and resilient economies across catchments and communities.

A resilient economy, and infrastructure to support it, is essential to our people. In the same way, a healthy river system must have a balance of flow and harvest. **There is no future on a dry system.**

The theme this year is ***“Economics, Dams & Infrastructure”***.

This exciting event will bring together leaders and decision makers from across the Murray-Darling Basin, and will be a wonderful opportunity to meet again, face to face.



The MDA's 78<sup>th</sup> National Conference & AGM is ***your opportunity*** to be part of the solution – to join the conversation, to inform future policy, and to engage with the innovators, scientists, educators, and leaders of our time.

[Join us in Albury](#), home to the winding Murray River and its waterways; where local, technical, and political leaders will come together to tackle the big issues of the Basin and forge a future for councils, catchments, and communities.

## **7. Basin Communities Leadership Program**

In March, we were able to fulfil our commitment regarding The Basin Community Leadership Program (BCLP) with Face-to-Face Workshops in a COVID-19-safe environment.

The details are as follows: participants completed the MDA Academy Online Training prior to attending the face-to-Face workshops. The Online Academy covers five modules including: Leadership Theory; Water Literacy and Communicating with Impact.

The MDA worked in partnership with LGA's to support the community, boost the local economy and encourage trade in small businesses. Whilst we have completed the proposed workshops as planned, there is potential to conduct further workshops with targeted community groups.

The conclusion of the Murray Darling Association's Basin Communities Leadership Program signals the Association's continued goal of improving water, and leadership literacy across the Murray-Darling Basin.

