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MEDIA RELEASE

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Socio-economic assessment criteria welcomed

The Murray Darling Association has welcomed measures that stipulate project proponents under the Murray-Darling Basin Water Infrastructure Program must consult with local government during the planning process.

The Murray-Darling Basin Ministerial Council agreed on socio-economic criteria and the associated assessment be adopted as the basis of assessing efficiency measure projects to ensure proposed projects have a neutral or positive socio-economic impact on Basin communities.

In an [eight-page submission](#) to the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources regarding the development of the socio-economic criteria, the MDA – the peak body for local government located in the Murray-Darling Basin – called for project proponents to consult with local councils and industry peak bodies during the planning process, as well as for the need for project applications to be made public.

Basin Ministers recognised this importance, with two of the 13 socio-economic criteria referring to the need to consult with local governments and/or regional development organisations.

“The MDA has, over recent years, advocated strongly for governments to recognise the importance of a clear and agreed definition of socioeconomic neutrality,” MDA Chief Executive Officer, Emma Bradbury said.

“We welcome the agreement on this set of criteria, which will enable local government to have a more direct role in addressing the socio-economic impacts felt by our communities through changing water availability.”

The Murray Darling Association's board members are:

Albury City Council	Cr David Thurley	0419 510 274
Moirra Shire Council	Cr Peter Mansfield	0428 574 433
Wentworth Shire Council	Cr Jane MacAllister	0427 118 396
Renmark Paringa Council	Cr Peter Hunter	0447 177 341
Northern Areas Council	Mayor Denis Clark	0408 148 725
Leeton Shire Council	Mayor Paul Maytom	0447 293 829
Gunnedah Shire Council	Cr John Campbell	0408 421 065
Balonne Shire Council	Mayor Richard Marsh	0409 692 299

ENDS

For more information, contact Murray Darling Association Chief Executive Officer, Emma Bradbury on 0429 905 017 or Cr David Thurley on 0419 510 274.