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## MEDIA RELEASE

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### Local communities' welcome progress on Water Resource Plans.

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Communities of the far west and the northern Basin have welcomed engagement with the NSW Water Minister Melinda Pavey and the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment as the department manages the embargos on pumping and affirms their commitment to connective flows all the way through the Lower Darling following recent rains.

Mayors and councillors from across the north west Basin met last week with the Department's Executive Director of Policy, Planning and Science to discuss the management of flows.

Councils sought assurance that the embargoes remain in place for so long as it takes to ensure that those objectives are achieved and that the Lower-Darling is fully recharged.

The MDA, council's peak body for local government in the Basin further understands that the NSW DPIE is poised to release its measurement policy in the coming weeks, a key step in process of regulating those flows harvested from the northern floodplains that are currently unregulated.

"We appreciate the challenges balancing the needs of communities and industries across the state and acknowledge Minister Pavey's commitment in working responsively to conditions as they arise," said Murray Darling Association Chief Executive Officer Emma Bradbury.

Minister Pavey also announced that she would take the water resource plans for eight surface water areas back to the stakeholder advisory panels for comment prior to submitting to the Commonwealth for accreditation.

"Basin councils are looking forward to completion of all NSW water resource plans. Without these plans, management of inflows varies, and our communities are often in conflict over competing priorities. The water resource plans will provide councils, businesses and industries with certainty, and the information they need to make informed and reliable decisions in relation to water use." Ms Bradbury said.

Councils will meet again with the Department in the next week to monitor progress of the flows and continues to urge the NSW government to quantify and confirm flow rates and triggers.

ENDS *For more information, contact Murray Darling Association Chief Executive Officer, Emma Bradbury on 0429 905 017*