



Murray Darling Association Inc.

Strategic Plan 2016-19

It's in the balance





TABLE OF CONTENTS

	WELCOME	1
1	STRATEGIC DIRECTION	2
1.1	OUR VISION	2
1.2	OUR PURPOSE	2
1.3	OUR OBJECTIVES	2
1.4	WHO WE ARE	3
1.5	WHERE WE ARE	3
1.6	WHERE WE ARE AND WHERE WE'RE GOING	4
2	MEMBERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE	5
2.1	OVERVIEW	5
2.2	OUR MEMBERS	6
2.3	OUR CONSTITUTION AND GOVERNANCE	7
2.3.1	VOTING RIGHTS	7
2.3.2	VOTING PRINCIPLES	8
2.3.3	ORGANISATION STRUCTURE	9
2.3.4	MURRAY DARLING FOUNDATION	10
2.4	ROLES	11
2.5	THE BASIN PLAN 2012	12
2.6	REGIONAL ISSUES	13
3	ACTION PLAN	16
4	OUR FINANCIAL BASE	23
5	CONCLUSION	25



WELCOME!

One voice representing local government and communities across the Murray Darling Basin – a powerful voice indeed.

The Murray Darling Association Strategic Plan 2016-19 aims to provide a clear, cohesive and concise statement of the actions that will enable the MDA to fulfil our purpose and to represent our members on issues of local and basin wide significance.

This Plan is a collection of the transformative actions that will provide a platform for genuine local government and community participation in the decisions that impact our communities on Basin-related issues.

With the implementation of the Murray Darling Basin Plan, there has never been a more important time to ensure that local government and communities work together with all levels of government to ensure balanced outcomes in the management of our resources.

This Strategic Plan identifies our most important needs and prioritises the concentration of our efforts.

Working together, with local government at the core of our membership we can achieve cost efficiencies; generate best practice; stimulate informed debate; identify positive outcomes and most importantly recognise our shared future.

This Plan has been endorsed by members and representatives of the 12 regions across the Basin.

Implementation of the Strategic Plan will rely on the strength and commitment of our local government members, our Board and their member councils, and our small but committed team of staff.

In its 74 years, there has never before been a published Plan for the MDA that recognises the importance of the issues unique to the distinct regions of the Basin and articulates a shared vision.

This Plan has benefited from the collective experience of hundreds of members, the contribution of stakeholders from across the policy spectrum, and from supporters and from critics representing a wide range of interests.

On behalf of the Murray Darling Association, I would like to thank those of you who have helped us shape the Strategic Plan 2016-19.

We now look forward to working with you all in its implementation.



Cr David Thurley
National President



Emma Bradbury
Chief Executive Officer

1 STRATEGIC DIRECTION

1.1 OUR VISION

A healthy Murray Darling Basin supports thriving communities, economic development and sustainable productivity.

1.2 OUR PURPOSE

To provide effective representation of local government and communities at state and federal level in the management of Basin resources by:

- providing information
- facilitating informed debate
- seeking to influence government policy.

1.3 OUR OBJECTIVES

To achieve our purpose, we will:

- advocate on behalf of Basin communities
- use local knowledge and expertise to fully understand regional issues
- act as a two-way conduit for information and discussion between our communities and governments
- encourage and facilitate debate about the things that matter for the Basin's future
- explore options to achieve sound solutions to regional issues
- test information to ensure a sound base for those options
- be an educational resource for the Basin.



1.4 WHO WE ARE

The Murray Darling Association is a membership-based peak representative organisation representing local government and communities across the Murray Darling Basin.

Established in 1944, the MDA has a strong history steeped in the traditions and achievements of local government.

This ensures that communities affected by the decisions of state and federal government have a clear and articulate voice at the table, informing the direction and realising the impact of those decisions.

1.5 WHERE WE ARE

Murray Darling Association represents 14pc of the Australian land continent.

It spans the length and breadth of the Murray Darling Basin, and includes all its communities and Basin resources.

REGIONS OF THE MURRAY DARLING ASSOCIATION



1.6 WHERE WE ARE AND WHERE WE'RE GOING

STRENGTHS

- primacy of purpose
- our members – the collective expertise across our local government organisations and the experience and passion across our communities
- over 74 years history of continuous service
- lobbying capacity and capability
- to inform policy on Basin-related matters.

OPPORTUNITIES

- to harness the voice of 167 local government organisations across the Basin
- membership growth
- engage the next generation of farmers, advocates and community leaders
- better use of social media and information distribution technologies
- clearer definition of regional issues in pursuit of common goals.

WEAKNESSES

- diluted regional engagement in some regions
- fragmentation of messaging or purpose
- membership services
- loss of corporate memory
- financial security/resourcing.

THREATS

- disunity, and division
- poor quality or misinformation, diminishing credibility
- succession management.

2 MEMBERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

2.1 OVERVIEW

Since its foundation, many things have endured at the MDA, including the passion and commitment of our members and the priority of our purpose.

A less lofty legacy is the alarming regularity with which our organisation has reached crisis point for the want of clear direction and good governance.

The definitive history of the organisation *Up and Doing: A brief history of the Murray Valley Development League and the Murray Darling Association from 1944 to 2014* by Adrian Wells notes that the question of whether to disband or fight-on has been considered on numerous occasions, from as far back as 1952.

On each occasion, the board, our members and stakeholders across all levels of government have been resolute. The purpose is essential. We must prevail.

The resilience of the MDA is equal to the community we represent.

Challenges across the organisation have included persistent confusion over voting rights at consecutive AGMs; steady decline in memberships; increase in expectations; inconsistencies in the organisation's messaging; financial uncertainty; and deviations from regulatory compliance.

These challenges threatened the viability of the organisation, prompting the Board to commence a review in 2014 of the MDA's operations, and to ensure in 2016 that the MDA is an organisation that is fit for purpose and that can continue to serve its members through the development of the Strategic Plan.

The result is a lean, focused and dynamic organisation, operating with the support of and for the benefit of local government and the communities of the Murray-Darling Basin.





2.2 OUR MEMBERS

We have four categories of membership:

- **Member councils**

A local government entity, located within a region, which is a current member

167 municipalities are connected with and derive their wellbeing from the resources of the Murray-Darling Basin.

Local government is directly connected with and representative of almost every aspect of a community and is tasked to ensure the wellbeing of its municipality.

Councils provide over 97pc of our core funding, and are the foundation and the future of our organisation.

Local government members pay a membership fee based on population size.

Supported by organisations staffed by skilled and experienced professionals, and informed and directed by elected representatives, local government is the primary MDA membership category.

- **Organisation**

An organisation, located within a region, which is a current member

The knowledge and expertise and unique perspective invested in organisations, agencies and community groups is essential to understanding the diversity of issues across our regions.

- **Individual**

Any person, living in a region, who is a current member.

The MDA recognises the incredible value and contribution that individuals have made to the direction and performance of the organisation.

- **Life members**

Recognised for their outstanding contribution to Basin communities, life members have, and continue to contribute a wealth of knowledge and experience to the MDA.

There are currently 17 life members.

2.3 OUR CONSTITUTION AND GOVERNANCE

Consistent with the review of the MDA's operations and compliance, the organisation also resolved to review the constitution.

The aim was not to change substantially the objectives/purposes of the organisation, however there were various uncertainties, interpretational issues and, in some cases, errors in the existing constitution.

Importantly, the constitution re-write elevated the shared understanding of our founding rules.

Rather, the re-write was intended to update the document to have it reflect the current objectives of the organisation and assist the MDA to operate with a clear and compliant governance structure.

The updated constitution was adopted at the 2016 Annual General Meeting AGM in Dubbo.

2.3.1 VOTING RIGHTS

To align with the intention of the constitution as it is currently written, and to reflect the entitlements of the membership categories, the voting rights of members are:

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY	VOTE AT THE AGM	VOTE AT REGION MEETINGS
Member Councils	1 vote, plus 1 vote per 20,000 head of population above the first 20,000; capped at 3 votes	2 votes, plus 1 vote per 20,000 head of population above the first 20,000; capped at 5 votes.
Organisation	1 vote if representative is elected as a region delegate*	1 vote
Individual	1 vote if elected as a region delegate*	1 vote
Life member	1 vote	1 vote

*Up to 3 non-local government delegates (total) per region





2.3.2 VOTING PRINCIPLES

The following principles provide clarity on issues that have previously been unclear:

- members of all categories are eligible to hold the position of Regional Chair, entitling them to a seat on the Board of Management
- serving councillors are not eligible for individual membership. This ensures that neither our member councils, individual councillors, nor the MDA are compromised by the potential for conflicting interests
- a local government member representative is not eligible to stand as an individual member delegate at the AGM. This preserves the right and opportunity for individual members to vote at the AGM
- individual member delegates to the AGM are appointed by the membership in each region
- life member votes at the AGM or regional meetings cannot be proxied. Members must be in attendance to vote
- life memberships are capped, and the criteria and process for the awarding of life membership established
- the chair of any meeting has only one casting vote.

2.3.3 ORGANISATION STRUCTURE

The MDA has 12 regions across the basin covering 4 states and the ACT, with regions associated as communities of interest.

Each region is led by a chairing council or individual, supported by a committee of no less than two and no more than five members.

The chair is elected annually by members of the region, and is responsible to provide, or appoint from within the region, adequate resources to ensure an effective secretariat.

The member council is represented in the chair by a delegated representative, duly appointed to the role by resolution of the member council.

Role of the regional chair:

- represents the interests of the membership at state and federal level, consistent with the resolutions of the region
- promotes growth and engagement within the region, to ensure robust discussion, informed debate, and clear resolutions to determine the advocacy priorities of the region
- conducts and chairs a minimum of four regional meetings per year
- attends bi-monthly meetings of the MDA Council of Regional Chairs
- occupies a position on the MDA board of management, and provides for the good governance of the association.
- attends bi-monthly meetings of the MDA board of management
- provides timely notification and communication between members and stakeholders through the executive
- liaises with the CEO to ensure effective management and maintenance of the region's membership database
- arranges preparation and distribution of meeting agendas and minutes.

Each region's AGM is held at the last regional meeting of the calendar year.

The regions are supported by a chief executive officer and small but dedicated team of staff, located in Echuca-Moama.

Election of the national president, vice president and treasurer is held in February each year.



2.3.4 MURRAY DARLING FOUNDATION

The Murray Darling Foundation was formed in 1998 as a sub-committee of the association to enable philanthropists, individuals and businesses to donate funds in a tax-effective way towards the restoration of the Murray-Darling Basin.

Since its inception the foundation has undertaken a number of projects, many of which have had a significant influence on basin life.

2014 saw the dissolution of the committee, a significant cessation of contributions, and a sense that the purpose of the Foundation has been diminished.

The restoration of the Murray-Darling Basin is now well served by the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder, and other state-based authorities.

Therefore, at board meeting 363 on 15/02/2017 the board of the Murray Darling Association moved that:

- a) the activities and function of the Murray Darling Foundation be suspended until further notice
- b) the Murray Darling Association continue to pursue projects in line with our stated purpose.

The Foundation remains a registered entity and there may be opportunities for the Foundation to resume active operation in the future.

Any activities undertaken by the Foundation are required to be self-managed, self-funding, and comply with the regulatory requirements under which it operates.



2.4 ROLES

Board

The role of the board is to set strategy for the organisation and employ and manage the CEO.

The combined council of regional chairs also forms the board of management of the Murray Darling Association.

National President

The National President has a role in:

- chairing the board of management.
- effectively representing the adopted position of the MDA on matters of Basin-wide significance at state and federal level.

Regional Chair

The role of the regional chair is to:

- facilitate regular meetings, to identify the interests and issues informing the advocacy priorities of their region.
- represent the position of their region at state and federal level

Chief Executive Officer

The role of the chief executive officer is to work with the board of management, the council of regional chairs, and the staff of the organisation to deliver the strategy.

Specific performance indicators, as set by the board of management annually will assist in prioritising the CEO's direction in the role.



2.5 THE BASIN PLAN 2012

The role of local government in planning for the future we want via the management of Basin resources:

The strategic plan for the Murray Darling Association must clearly recognise the fundamental significance of the Basin Plan 2012 to our current role and purpose.

A core objective of the Basin Plan is to ensure that the social, environmental and economic impacts of the implementation of the Plan is balanced and positive.

The Murray Darling Basin Authority, tasked with the implementation of the Basin Plan shares with the MDA a commonality of work undertaken, and a mutual appreciation of the challenges faced.

Both authorities recognise the importance of mutual cooperation, consultation and knowledge sharing.

It is important that the Murray Darling Association articulates a clear and united position in relation to the often contentious Plan.

From this the MDA can provide advocacy and direction for policy changes and management practices, and avoid

confusion and damage that can be caused by individual advocates who may purport to represent the Murray Darling Association.

The MDA supports the purpose of and the need for the Basin Plan 2012, and acknowledges that it is an adopted strategy agreed by all states and the commonwealth.

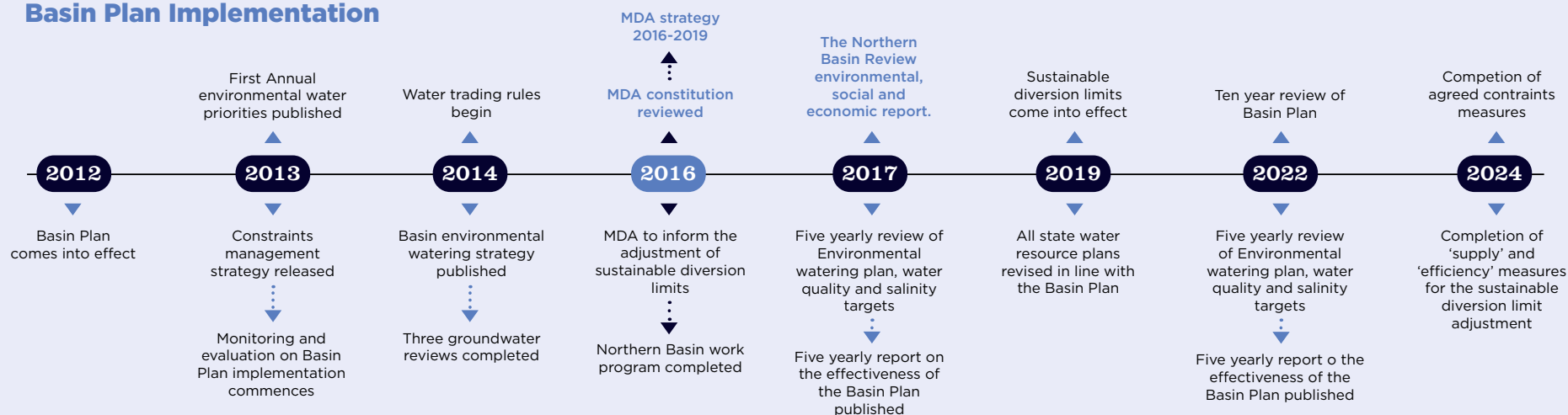
The MDA acknowledges that elements of the basin plan will always benefit from the application of adaptive management principles and practices.

We commit to work constructively with the MDBA, and other stakeholders using our collective engagement and influence for the overall benefit of the Murray Darling Basin and the communities reliant upon its resources, via the implementation of the basin plan.

The MDA will continue to advocate for the development of a rigorous and repeatable basin plan evaluation framework and methodology against which the social and economic impacts of the plan can be measured and assessed.

Any such assessment tool must be able to identify and distinguish short term, unrelated, and one-off impacts from the underlying performance of the Plan.

Basin Plan Implementation



2.6 REGIONAL ISSUES

As an Association we **share** the vision of a healthy Murray Darling Basin that supports thriving communities, economic development and sustainable productivity, and **work together in our common purpose** to provide effective representation of local government and communities at state and federal level in the management of Basin resources by providing information, facilitating debate, and seeking to influence government policy common.

We also recognise that our regions represent the interests, issues and circumstances of a wide array of communities across a vast tract of the Australian continent.

By working together to better understand the unique issues that define, challenge and shape our regions, we are better able to inform policy and achieve shared solutions.

The development of our Issues Map, some of the key issues of which are noted below, will inform the strategic direction and define the work of our regions.

The issues outlined below are not intended to be final. They are a snap-shot from which the regions will each develop a more comprehensive and authoritative Regional Strategy.

For more information contact your Regional Chair.

REGION 1

Chair
Albury City
Council
Cr David
Thurley

- Balance between the use of water for power generation and the operation of Snowy Hydro and water for irrigation and the environment
- Groundwater mining
- Potential impacts of the constraints management strategy

REGION 2

Chair
Moirā Shire
Council
Cr Peter
Mansfield

- Impact of the loss of 27% of productive water from the region following the millennium drought. The swiss cheese effect of non-productive farms being interspersed between highly productive irrigated properties with the remaining responsible for higher distribution costs of water.
- The buyback of water increasing the market value of water for both permanent and temporary trade making some crops in low water allocation periods non-viable.
- Constraints management for delivery of environmental water through the systems with the possibility of flooding of productive lands.
- Conversion of productive red gum forests to national parks and resulting loss of employment and royalties to the region.
- Environmental sustainability of the river systems and river valleys.

REGION 3

Chair
Balranald Shire
Council
Cr Leigh Byron

- Need for structural adjustment packages for directly affected economically impacted communities
- Efficiency of environmental infrastructure investments
- Regional leadership and local engagement

REGION 4

Broken Hill City
Council
Cr Darriea Turley

- Quality and quantity of water available through the Menindee Lakes and reliant communities
- Regional leadership and local engagement

REGION 5
Renmark
Paringa Council
Cr Peter Hunter

- River health
- Balancing the needs and interests of tourism and horticulture
- Managing the uncertainty and diminished confidence that results from poor communication and understanding of the impacts of the Basin Plan.

REGION 6
Alexandrina
Council
Cr Barry Featherston

- Lack of available information on the evaluation and monitoring of the Murray Darling Basin Plan
- Quality and quantity of water reaching the Murray Mouth
- Investigation of the connector between the Lower Lakes and the Coorong
- Understanding the trigger points and conditions for the effective use of the desalination plant.

REGION 7
Town of Walkerville
Cr David Shetliffe

- Availability and quality of water available to the metro area – based on conditions impacting the balance of shandy of Mt Lofty catchment resource with water from the river system.
- Economic confidence within the metro area driven by rural and regional conditions.
- Opportunity for contribution of urban and metro development of water saving and management technologies that can benefit rural basin communities.
- Understanding the trigger points and conditions for the effective use of the desalination plant.

REGION 8
Northern Areas
Council
Cr Denis Clark

- Reliance on the availability of Murray water whilst being external to the catchment.
- Understanding the trigger points and conditions for the effective use of the desalination plant.

REGION 9
Leeton Council
Cr Paul Maytom

- Lack of understanding of the progress of the Murray Darling Plan Basin
- Information on the social and economic
- Absence of effective monitoring and evaluation of the social and economic impacts of the Basin Plan creating uncertainty and division
- Efficiency and effectiveness of on-river water storages and delivery

REGION 10
Vacant

- No targeted structural adjustment packages for directly affected economically impacted communities
- Absence of feedback from relevant authorities regarding outcomes of social, economic and environments benefits, or other impacts
- Resolution of competing priorities between floodplain graziers and irrigated agriculture and mining.

REGION 11
Vacant

- Northern Basin Review
- Social and economic impacts assessment
- Regional leadership and local engagement

REGION 12
Balonne Shire
Council
Cr Richard Marsh

- Northern Basin Review
- Regional leadership and local engagement
- Regional leadership and local engagement



3 ACTION PLAN

GOALS

Our goals align directly with the MDA's purpose

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

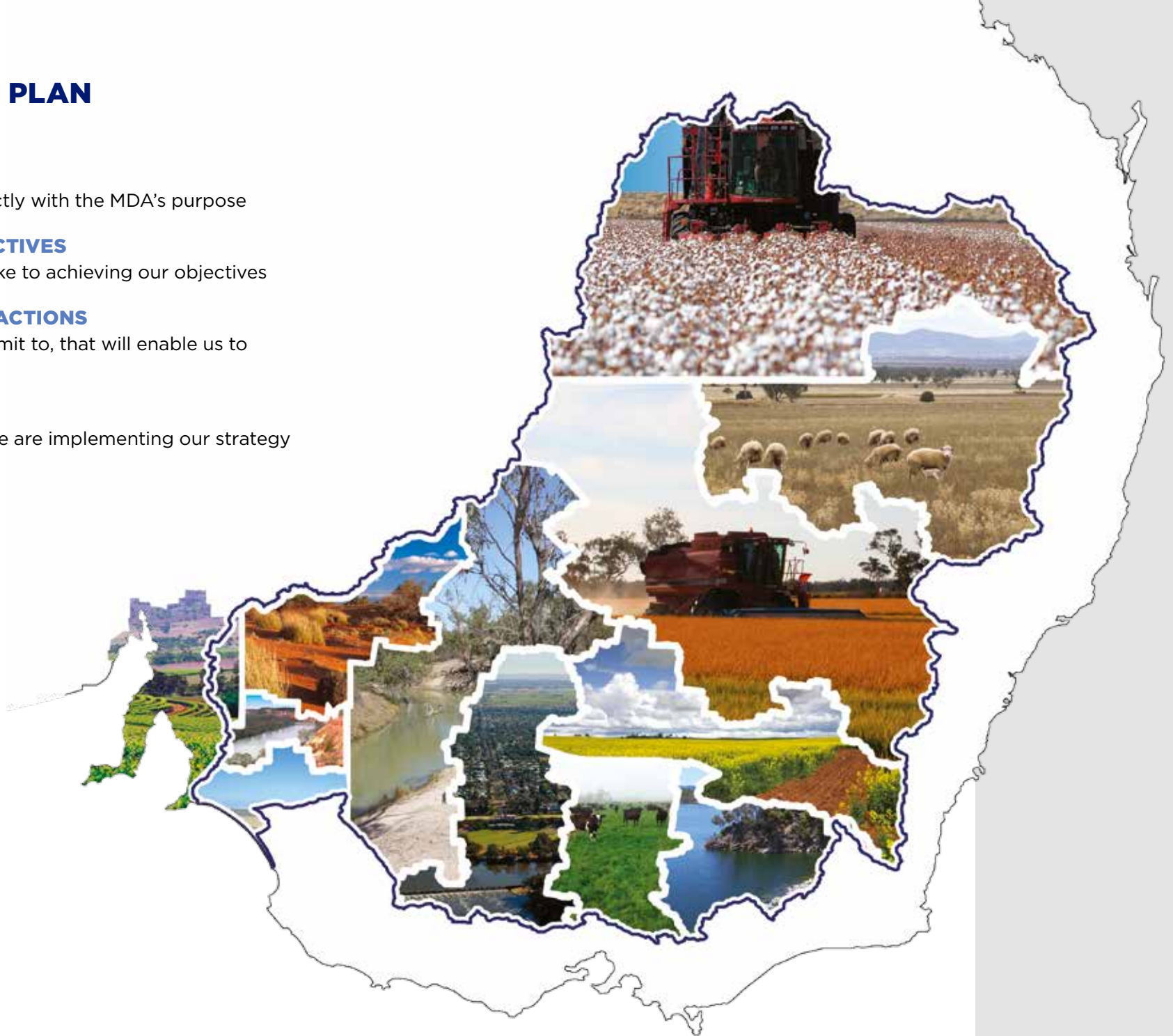
The approach we take to achieving our objectives

PRINCIPLES AND ACTIONS

The actions we commit to, that will enable us to achieve our goals

INDICATIONS

How will we know we are implementing our strategy



GOAL #1: TO BE A VALUED SOURCE OF ACCURATE, VALID, TIMELY INFORMATION

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #1:

Utilise local knowledge and expertise

PRINCIPLES AND ACTIONS:

- ▶ Engage and encourage the active contribution of all councils within a region
- ▶ Ensure material considered at the regions is a position of the member council/s represented
- ▶ Value and encourage the contribution of individual members
- ▶ To understand and be informed by indigenous experience, expertise and perspectives

INDICATIONS:

- ▶ All councils regularly attend and participate in region meetings
- ▶ Reference by delegates to the resolutions and policies of the councils they represent
- ▶ Increased satisfaction levels and support by individual members
- ▶ Every region has an MOU with, or membership of local indigenous community representative organisation

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #2:

To be a two way conduit of information between our membership and responsible authorities

PRINCIPLES AND ACTIONS:

- ▶ Regularly distribute to our membership information received from our partner agencies and stakeholders
- ▶ Share information from our membership with our partner agencies and stakeholders
- ▶ Attend meetings and engage with partner agencies and stakeholders
- ▶ Attend meetings and engage with member councils and regions

INDICATIONS:

- ▶ Member councils both provide and rely on information shared between council and the MDA
- ▶ The minutes of region meetings are tabled at council by all council delegates
- ▶ Information is tested and assessed by members and stakeholders
- ▶ Responsible authorities engage more actively and responsively with the MDA

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #3:

To build memberships

PRINCIPLES AND ACTIONS:

- ▶ Value local government as the representative of the community
- ▶ Value the diversity of experience, expertise and perspective contributed by associate members
- ▶ Demonstrate value to both local government and associate members through a clearly articulated, fair and constructive membership rights
- ▶ Reform the anomalies contained within the voting rights to ensure effective representation of and value for members and responsibilities, including voting rights

INDICATIONS:

- ▶ Target 80pc membership of all municipalities in each region
- ▶ Target 1:1 ratio or better of local government and associate memberships across all regions
- ▶ Adopt a compliant and workable draft of the MDA Constitution by 2016

GOAL #2: TO FACILITATE INFORMED AND CONSTRUCTIVE DEBATE

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #1:

To develop the strength and authority of the regions

PRINCIPLES AND ACTIONS:

- ▶ Properly resource our secretariats through data sharing and support
- ▶ Conduct at least 4 region meetings per year
- ▶ Ensure that regional meeting minutes, discussions, and resolutions are detailed, accurate and constructive
- ▶ Support strong leadership within the regions
- ▶ Apply eligibility criteria to regional leadership roles to strengthen regional leadership
- ▶ Maintain current and accurate data to support member engagement
- ▶ Develop consistent processes and procedures, data and resources to support the regional secretariats
- ▶ Encourage councils to appoint appropriately skilled, experienced and qualified delegates
- ▶ Grow membership numbers and participation
- ▶ To re-establish the MDA's presence in the Northern Basin
- ▶ Develop a Communication and Marketing Plan that sets out our pathway to being an effective and efficient conduit of information

INDICATIONS:

- ▶ Current and accurate database
- ▶ Compliance across all regions
- ▶ Member councils both provide and rely on information shared between council and the MDA
- ▶ Minutes contribute to and support the advocacy issues and priorities
- ▶ Elections are robustly contested among member councils
- ▶ Member councils actively consider the value of their contribution to regional leadership on Basin related issues
- ▶ Nominations are strongly supported by delegates' member councils
- ▶ Member councils provide resources to support the Chair
- ▶ All members are engaged, connected and fully informed
- ▶ A balanced mix of local government representative (councillor) and professional (officer) delegates
- ▶ Membership income reaches \$300,000
- ▶ Every region achieves 100% financial participation of the municipalities in their region
- ▶ Resolutions of the regions reflect and are supported by the position and or policies of member councils
- ▶ Appoint an interim Chairing council for regions 11 and 12
- ▶ Well lead, compliant region within 12 months of the appointment of an interim Chair
- ▶ Consistent and timely delivery of approved messaging, communication and information sharing

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #2:

To create a shared understanding of issues and priorities across the regions

PRINCIPLES AND ACTIONS:

- ▶ Conduct Bi-Monthly meeting of the Regional Chairs - 'Council of Regional Chairs'
- ▶ Development of a regional issues map

INDICATIONS:

- ▶ Executive records
- ▶ Adoption of the Issues Map

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #3:

Communicate effectively inter-regionally

PRINCIPLES AND ACTIONS:

- ▶ Conduct bi-monthly meetings of the region Chairs
- ▶ Effective use of social media
- ▶ Distinguish the role of the regional chair, and the responsibilities as board members
- ▶ Develop an Issues Map for the Basin regions that describes the range of needs and concerns across the different municipalities and provides a foundation for informed discussion and shared understanding
- ▶ Investment in technology to ensure high-quality distance-conferencing across and outside the Basin

INDICATIONS:

- ▶ Adoption of bi-monthly Board, and Council of Regional Chairs meetings
- ▶ Implementation of seamless video conferencing for whole of Board/Council of Regional Chairs meeting





GOAL #3: TO INFLUENCE THE POLICIES OF GOVERNMENT

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #1:

To effectively advocate on behalf of our members

PRINCIPLES AND ACTIONS:

- ▶ Empower and support regions to be more active in their advocacy
- ▶ Maintain detailed and accurate minutes of region meetings
- ▶ Rely on the adopted position, reports and professional expertise of member councils in forming advocacy positions and priorities
- ▶ Demonstrate clear accountability and veracity of advocacy positions and priorities

INDICATIONS:

- ▶ Region Chairs meet regularly with state and federal members of parliament
- ▶ Publication of the Minutes of Region meetings
- ▶ Minutes are supported by the reports and policies of member councils
- ▶ Publication of the minutes of the Council of Regional Chairs

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #2:

To contribute effectively to state and federal policy review.

PRINCIPLES AND ACTIONS:

- ▶ Share knowledge with relevant political and departmental leaders
- ▶ Respond to invitations for feedback on relevant policy

INDICATIONS:

- ▶ To develop a rigorous and repeatable Basin Plan evaluation framework and methodology that can distinguish the one-off and short-term impacts from the underlying performance and structural impacts of the Basin Plan
- ▶ To provide policy direction to inform the implementation of the SDL Adjustment Mechanism
- ▶ To participate in the Northern Basin Review

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #3:

To work with consultants and researchers to investigate the possibilities of improving Plan outcomes

PRINCIPLES AND ACTIONS:

- ▶ Partner with universities and other sources of research and technical expertise
- ▶ Deliver a successful Annual National Conference

INDICATIONS:

- ▶ The application of new thinking from experiences gained informs new policy in Basin management practices
- ▶ Conference delivers a clear set of advocacy priorities for the year ahead, informed by the regions and resolved by the members through an accountable and clear voting framework

GOAL #4: BE A VALUED AND SUSTAINABLE ORGANISATION

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #1:

To apply the principles of good governance

PRINCIPLES AND ACTIONS:

- ▶ To ensure regulatory compliance
- ▶ Focus on our core purpose and areas of expertise

INDICATIONS:

- ▶ Regular, compliant process and financial audits
- ▶ Distribute the required changes in a new draft Constitution for consultation with the regions in readiness for the next AGM
- ▶ Every action by the MDA aligns to the purpose and objectives of the organisation

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #2:

To attract and retain diversity of thought, opinion, experience and representation

PRINCIPLES AND ACTIONS:

- ▶ Manage for effective succession
- ▶ Identify and address any barriers to the equal participation of women
- ▶ To understand and be informed by indigenous experience, expertise and perspectives

INDICATIONS:

- ▶ Every region has a strong executive with identified successors developing the skills and experience required to lead the region
- ▶ Board adopts a plan for succession of the Chief Executive Officer
- ▶ Equal gender representation across the staff, board and regions
- ▶ Every region has an MOU with, or membership of their local ROCs, JOs and LGAs
- ▶ Every region has an MOU with, or membership of local indigenous community representative organisation

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #3

To achieve sufficient revenue to meet the immediate and long-term operational costs of the MDA through streams of recurrent funding and project grant opportunities.

PRINCIPLES AND ACTIONS

- ▶ Grant submissions
- ▶ Develop partnerships
- ▶ Attract and deliver appropriate projects

INDICATIONS

- ▶ 80 per cent membership
- ▶ Membership is valued
- ▶ Sufficient human and other resources to meet operational demand in a safe and sustainable way

4 OUR FINANCIAL BASE

Current annual membership income stands at approximately \$200,000, enabling the MDA to deliver lean but effective representation and to ensure regulatory compliance.

It is imperative that memberships grow, in order to deliver better informed and empowered representation across the regions.

With growth in memberships comes an increase in revenue, allowing for further investment in delivering on the purpose of the organisation.

The current target is to grow annual membership income to \$220,000 by 2017, \$250,000 by 2018 and \$290,000 by 2019.

The role of Regional Chair provides further resources through secretariat support.

This support leverages membership income and is consistent with the MDA's current strategy to provide lean, focused representative advocacy.





COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP COST



\$0.27 plus GST per head of population
capped at \$6,000.00 plus GST

ie: 100,000 popl (last ABS Census)

~~\$27,0000.00~~

Total cost \$6,600.00

* Membership fees may be reviewed from time to time

5 CONCLUSION

In order to succeed in what is an imperative purpose, we must constantly respond to the needs of our members. We must deliver value, and ensure our strategy is clear, focused and fit to carry us forward into a challenging and dynamic future.

To be effective, our strategy has to be well communicated. It has to be a shared vision. And it must be understood.

But most of all, this strategy has to inspire.

Recognising this, the Board of Management representing its respective communities and regions; the executive team, and a skilled and experienced facilitator met in Echuca Victoria, February 2016.

Strategy and governance is a team activity.

The Echuca meeting generated creative discussions that encouraged innovation and challenged the status quo.

From those discussions, including invited presentations and submissions from stakeholders, the current plan of action emerged.





Murray Darling Association Inc. Strategic Plan 2016-2019

Incorporated under the Association's Incorporation Act
1984 NSW Registered number Y 40317-47

Copyright © Murray Darling Association Inc. April 2016

National Library of Australia
ISSN 0443-7767

Further copies are available from the
Murray Darling Association Echuca office:

PO Box 1268

Echuca Vic 3564

03 5480 3805

adminmda.asn.au

www.mda.asn.au

ABN: 64 636 490 493

