



## Chief Executive Officer's Report

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### 1. Introduction

In addition to ‘business as usual’ issues, we have been focusing on key deliverables, including:

- Wrapping up BCLP programme, including reporting and audit requirements
- Executing, reporting and finalising CSIRO ‘Circular Economy’ project
- Organising conference and AGM
- Working on financials
- Following up on previous motions and preparing motions for the AGM

### 2. Basin Community Leadership Program

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

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.

In the June quarter, we followed up on the administrative requirements of the programme including all requisite reporting as well as an independent audit. As a result of successfully completing these requirements, we received a small amount of additional funding.



### 3. CSIRO and the Circular Economy

CSIRO Land and Water has partnered with MDA to investigate and explore a series of strategic growth areas that align with the biggest land and water challenges faced by Australian governments/agencies, industries and communities. These growth areas will build on capabilities and that of our partners and transform the boundaries of the types of products, research projects and services we might collaborate on.

They have identified Repurposing Waste / Circular Economy as a strategic growth area and we are interested in validating this with LGA's as a valued partner. We would like to understand more about how LGA's work within the repurposing waste / circular economy area within their organisation. They are also keen to hear about any future aspirations they might have in regard to infrastructure solutions they need now and into the future. To capture these insights. We completed a series of meetings in May and June that will help inform the future of this growth area and ensure they can design solutions that are of value for all. We have now successfully completed all requirement and presented to the management of CSIRO. They were very pleased with our work and there is the potential to conduct further work with CSIRO departments.

### 4. Key Meetings and Engagements

Date	Event/meeting	Location
1/7/22	Commonwealth Government Meetings – socialising outcomes of Circular Economy MDA project	Held Virtually
7/7/22	Barmah-Millewa Feasibility Study Online information Session 1	Held Virtually
14/7/22	July Peak Groups Briefing 2022	Held Virtually
15/7/22	Darling Downs & SW QLD Council of Mayors Meeting	Held Virtually
20/7/22	Meeting with Michele Akeroyd – CSIRO	Canberra
20/7/22	Meeting with David Post	Canberra
20/7/22	Meeting with the CSIRO – Project findings/insights from the Customer Validation project of Local Governments in the Basin around Circular Economy	Canberra
26/7/22	Meeting with Nicole McCartney – CSIRO, Jody Bruce – CSIRO	Held Virtually
26/7/22	Meeting with Katie Warner – NECMA	Albury
27/7/22	Meeting with Rod Knight – Water Stewardship Asia Pacific	Held Virtually
29/7/22	Meeting with the CSIRO – Conversations: Megatrends	Held Virtually
3/8/22	Meeting with Berrigan Shire Council	Berrigan
9/8/22	Meeting with Nicole McCartney – CSIRO	Canberra
10/8/22	Meeting with Daniel Stoll – Department of Infrastructure, Regional Development and Communications	Canberra
10/8/22	Meeting with Stefan Hajkowicz – Senior Principal Scientist, Strategic Foresight - CSIRO	Canberra
10/8/22	Meeting with Dr Heinz Schandl - CSIRO	Canberra
15/8/22	MRLGA Water Position Paper Working Group	Held Virtually
1/9/22	Workshop with APWS – Narromine T2G project	Pullenvale



## 5. 78<sup>th</sup> National Conference and AGM

On behalf of the team here, I am absolutely thrilled to officially launch the webpage and invite you to the ***Murray Darling Association's 78th National Conference and AGM*** to be held **19~21st September, 2022** in **Albury, NSW**. To register for the event, please visit the [conference registration website](#).

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.

As the Conference is drawing ever closer, the Murray Darling Association is excited to announce an incredible line-up of guest speakers!

Over the course of the conference delegates and attendees will hear from:

- **Hon Tanya Plibersek MP**, Minister for Environment and Water
- **Senator Perin Davey**, Shadow Water Minister
- **Hon Glenn Butcher MP**, Queensland Minister for Water
- **Sam Birrell MP**, Member for Nicholls
- **CEO Andrew McConville**, MDBA
- **Andrew Reynolds**, Executive Director River Management, MDBA
- **Hon Troy Grant**, Inspector-General for Water Compliance
- **Hilary Johnson**, Assistant Secretary, CEWO
- **Michael Pisasale**, Water Policy manager, Murray Irrigation
- **Dr Heinz Schandl**, Waste Impact management Mission Lead, CSIRO
- **CEO Rod Knight**, WSAP
- **Greg Ryan**, Society President, Albury & District Historical Society
- **Professor Jamie Pittock**, ANU WGOCS
- **Professor Max Finlayson**, CSU,
- **Murray Jones, Dr David Hammond, and Dr Fred Singleton**, IXOM

The MDA's 78th 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: home to the winding Murray, where local, technical and political leaders will come together to tackle the big issues of the Basin and forge a future of connected councils, catchments and communities.

The program for presenters and guest speakers is well underway and the Planning committee are working on all logistical matters to secure a whole Albury tourist experience, including the opportunity to interact with businesses and organisations through Exhibition Booths, including:

- **Murray-Darling Basin Authority**
- **IXOM**
- **Water Stewardship Asia Pacific**
- **Bureau of Meteorology**, and the
- **Commonwealth Environmental Water Office**



## 6. Engagement Report on the benefits of membership:

With over 167 councils in the MDB, the ongoing partnership between Councils and the Murray Darling Association elevates local and regional issues and priorities to the state and federal level providing national recognition of local priorities.

Membership to the MDA delivers social, economic, and environmental benefits to each community by creating partnerships, participating in events, and accessing networks and services that align with and support all Community plans, in the areas of Community, Environment, Economy and Council.

We know that councils and the local government sector are increasingly resource challenged and are looking for services, relationships and partnerships that assist in achieving your council's and your region's strategic priorities.

Water, land management, energy and community wellbeing are front and centre of almost every council's priorities. A strong relationship between council and the MDA provides opportunities to

- partner with councils and regional groups in providing local case studies and experience to support regional and national positions and advocacy strategies.
- raise the profile of your council and the local government sector through MDA's partnerships with the Commonwealth.
- present strategically aligned priorities, objectives, and advocacy to state and federal governments.
- leverage regional efficiencies and Basin-scale capability and positions.

### **Benefits to your community.**

The MDA fosters a culture of community collaboration and leadership development to improve social, cultural, environmental, and economic well-being across the Murray-Darling Basin.

Working together with member councils and our regions, we achieve policy change and ensure local knowledge informs the national dialogue on water reform, land management, environmental sustainability, leadership development and education, and regional economic diversification.

Council's participation at MDA region and national meetings builds regional relationships and elevates the community's priorities to the state and federal level, informing decisions and outcomes that impact your local area.



### **Benefits to your environment.**

There is no future on a dry riverbed. At the core of our vision is a strong emphasis on science and education to inform policies for the sustainable management of Basin resources to ensure a healthy and prosperous future.

The MDA's vision, which drives our strategic and operational direction, is for *local government and communities to work together to achieve a healthy, vibrant and thriving Murray-Darling Basin*. As a result, the MDA has:

- Partnered with CSIRO with a focus on science and education to address some of the Basin's toughest challenges.
- Advocated for and represented local government in environmental issues, including floodplain harvesting etc.
- Partnered with Murray-Darling Basin Authority, better supporting local government through information sharing and representation.
- Supported regions to develop Climate Ready Communities statements

### **Benefits to your economy.**

For many, if not all, Basin communities, water security plays an important role in economic growth and sustainability. Through the MDA's regional alignments and partnerships, member councils leverage the value of knowledge sharing across the local government and regional development sectors to peruse water quality, water security and other priorities.

The MDA provides member councils with partnerships that support regional economic development and diversification initiatives.

### **Benefits to your council.**

Our mission is to provide high value services to our members, and their communities by delivering quality projects, events and products create enduring value for [Basin communities and governments](#).

### **Our achievements**

The Murray Darling Association has been successful in shifting policies to better reflect the needs of the Basin communities, and we are continuing to grow our reach and impact as portrayed in our [Vision 2025 Strategic Plan](#).

The Murray Darling Association has made ongoing progress on it's motions and representation of the communities of the Murray-Darling Basin, offering a continued voice through its [progress and achievements](#) throughout 2021-22.

The relationship between the MDA and our member Councils contributes strongly to the development of the local government sector as a whole and our collective role in ensuring a vibrant, sustainable future for the Murray-Darling Basin.

*Mark D. Lamb*

**Chief Executive Officer**



