



Meeting Update

Murray Lower Darling Rivers Indigenous Nations

Meeting Details: MLDRIN Directors' Meeting

Date: 27th and 28th April 2017

Venue: North East Water Offices, Wodonga

Attendance

Kingsley Abdulah (Maraura), Stephen Atkinson (Wadi Wadi), Coral Peckham (Wiradjuri), Alice Williams (Wolgalu), Stewart Taylor (Wemba Wemba), Grant Rigney (Ngarrindjeri), Rene Woods (Nari Nari), Will Mooney (Executive Officer).

Key issues discussed:

- North East Water (NEW) provided support to hold a Directors' meeting at their offices in Wodonga. MLDRIN Directors' attended a field trip to the Mount Pilot rock art site, with Dhudhuroa Elder Uncle Alan Murray and the NEW Board. Directors also met with the NEW Board for an informal lunch meeting to discuss opportunities for working together.
- Matt Barwick (national coordinator for the National Carp Control Plan) provided a detailed update on plans for the release of the Carp herpes virus and other control activities. Directors discussed concerns and opportunities for Aboriginal involvement in Carp control.
- MDBA Aboriginal Partnerships staff outlined approaches for the [2017 evaluation of the Basin Plan](#). The evaluation will consider outcomes for Aboriginal people arising from implementation of the Basin Plan. A Steering Committee has been established to guide MDBA evaluation of Aboriginal outcomes. MLDRIN representatives on the Steering Committee are Rene Woods and Alice Williams. MDBA staff outlined the methodology for researching the impacts of the Basin Plan on Aboriginal communities.
- Directors received an update from the National Cultural Flows Research Project. Key components of the Project are due for completion in late 2017. This will be an important opportunity to push for further reform.
- Directors received an update regarding MDBA funding. MDBA's total project budget for 2017-18 is significantly reduced. Discussions about MLDRIN and NBAN budgets for the next financial year are ongoing, but reductions are possible. Due to limited budgets, some activities under the MDBA/MLDRIN Projects Partnership will not be able to proceed at this stage.
- Heard presentations from Victorian Aboriginal Water Unit (DELWP) staff. Troy McDonald updated Directors about plans for an 'Aboriginal Water Week' in

May 2017. Details will be forthcoming.

- NSW Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) and NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI Water) staff updated about activities including development of Long Term Watering Plans and the future of the Aboriginal Water Initiative (AWI) in NSW. There have been major cuts to Aboriginal staff in the AWI. MLDRIN Directors will be following this up with DPI staff.
- Bruce Lindsay update Directors about activities under the Partnership with Environmental Justice Australia.

Key resolutions and decisions:

- Reviewed a letter from Kevin Atkinson applying for membership of MLDRIN as a representative of Bangerang Traditional Owners – Directors referred the letter to the next full gathering for consideration.
- Endorsed a draft statement covering cultural values and water quality for the Victorian State Environment Protection Policy (Waters). Position is available upon request to the Executive Officer.
- Endorsed use of a standard acknowledgement text for all MDBA documents.
- Nominated Kingsley Abdulla as a representative for the Murray Lower Darling Water Resource Plan Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAP)
- Endorsed a project proposal and funding contract with Murray Local Land Services (LLS) for work on capacity building with Traditional Owners
- Reviewed a draft partnership agreement between MLDRIN and North East Water. Director's referred the draft to the next Full Gathering for consideration.

Key upcoming dates

- **15th-18th May 2017** – South Australian Nations' Water Planning Gathering, Camp Coorong, SA.
- **16th May 2017** - Fourth Annual Water Planners Forum, Toowoomba QLD.
- **17th May 2017** – Applications close for the Peter Cullen Trust Science to Policy Leadership program. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders applicants are being sought. Additional information and the relevant application forms for scholarships and employer sponsors can be found at <http://www.petercullentrust.com.au/>
- **25th May to 29th May 2017** - 'Aboriginal Water Week' including first meeting of the Water for Country Project Control Group. To register your interest in attending the Economic Development Forum on the 29 May 2017, please follow link: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/aboriginal-water-program-economic-development-forum-tickets-34190346246>
- **29th May 2017** - Traditional Owner 'economic development for water' forum, Aborigines Advancement League, Thornbury VIC.
- **16th-17th June** - MLDRIN Full Gathering, Wentworth Visitor Information Centre, Wentworth NSW.
- **16th June 2017** - Basin Ministerial Council Meeting, Canberra ACT

If you have any questions about anything raised in this update please feel free to contact Will Mooney on **0404 163 700** or email: executiveofficer.mldrin@gmail.com