



Meeting Update

Murray Lower Darling Rivers Indigenous Nations

Meeting Details: MLDRIN Full Gathering
Date: 16 th and 17 th June 2017
Venue: Visitor's Information Centre: Wentworth NSW, Barkindji Country

Attendance
Kingsley and Gary Abdulah (Maraura), Stephen Atkinson (Wadi Wadi), Wayne Carr, Ramsay Freeman, Jimmy Ingram, Coral Peckham, Peter Ingram (Wiradjuri), Janice Freeman-Williams, Alice Williams (Wolgalu), Bradley Bell, Rebecca Ritters (Observer) (Ngunnawal), Gary Hansen, Marcus Stewart (Taungurung), Brendan Kennedy (Tatti Tatti), Bella Kennedy, Stewart Taylor (Wemba Wamba), Ricky Kirby (Mutthi Mutthi), Vince Kirby (Yita Yita), Grant Rigney, Isobell Campbell (Ngarrindjeri), Neville Whyman, Sharnie Hamilton (Barapa Barapa), Rene Woods, Ian Woods (Nari Nari), Betty Pearce, Badger Bates (Barkandji), Mathew Gardiner (Waywurru), Ronald Hughes (Dhudhuroa – day 2 only), Monica Morgan (Observer- Yorta Yorta), Rodney Carter (Dja Dja Wurrung), Tarlina Gardiner, Alice Kolosa, Karmen Jobling (Observers – Wurrundjeri), Norman Wilson (Ngintait).

Key issues discussed:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The meeting was held on Barkindji Country. Uncle Warren Clarke welcomed the delegation and incoming Barkindji Delegate Uncle Badger Bates spoke about the state of the Darling River, including concern regarding development of the Broken Hill water pipeline and aspiration to have the Baarka (Darling River) heritage listed.• Dja Dja Wurrung, Yorta Yorta, Ngarrindjeri, Wiradjuri, Wadi Wadi and Ngunnawal delegates provided updates of key activities since the March Dubbo Meeting.• Bruce Lindsay from Environmental Justice Australia presented on progress around Component 5 of the National Cultural Flows Research Project. Component 5 will provide recommendations for policy and legislative changes to give effect to cultural flows.• Ken Stewart, Norman Wilson and Mallee CMA Staff presented on work undertaken in Lindsay Island area, including an Indigenous fishing day. Delegates heard about progress of the 'Tri-State Alliance' grouping, including NRM agencies from Southern NSW, Victoria, and South Australia. Delegates expressed a desire to be more closely involved in tri-state alliance activities.• MDBA Staff advised MLDRIN of new funding arrangements. Total MDBA

funding will be reduced considerably (by \$115,000 pa). There will be a new, four year, funding agreement commencing 1st July 2017.

- MDBA Staff discussed the Basin Plan Evaluation process. 2017 evaluation of Aboriginal outcomes will be a proof of concept process, focussed on Wentworth/Dareton area.
- Michelle Young (MDBA) outlined Evaluation project looking at the shared community (including Aboriginal) benefits from environmental watering.
- Delegates reviewed and endorsed a water resource planning animation prepared by MDBA, with input and advice from MLDRIN.
- MLDRIN Staff updated the Delegation about funding from the Victorian Government and upcoming appointment of two new permanent positions: an Admin Officer and a Projects and Engagement Officer
- NSW DPI Fisheries presented on the critical importance of the Darling River for spawning of native freshwater fish.

Key resolutions and decisions:

- A vote was held to appoint a new Director to the MLDRIN Board. Marcus Stewart (Taungurung) was voted in as a Director. This brings the number of Directors to 9.
- Victorian MLDRIN Delegates held a special session on Thursday 15th June to discuss options around the management of \$5M, to support a roadmap to Aboriginal participation in water markets, allocated under the Victorian water plan. A range of perspectives were presented on the best approach. Delegates agreed on a set of basic principles to guide decisions. These were: 1) That the management of the funding should be determined and overseen by Victorian Traditional Owners 2) that the funding should be held external to Government and 3) that governance mechanisms for the holding and allocation of the funding should be inclusive and representative. The MLDRIN Board will continue to engage with VIC Government representatives on these issues.
- Delegates agreed to establish a working group and plan an anniversary celebration for the Echuca Declaration, which will be 10 years old this November.

Key upcoming dates

- 17th July- 10th August: Community consultations regarding reform of the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Act 2005* to allow the Indigenous Land Corporation (ILC) to invest in water and water activities. Dates for all consultation sessions and a discussion paper can be found on [the ILC website](#).
- 6-8th August, MLDRIN Directors' Meeting, Adelaide SA
- 25th August: due date for submissions to the [inquiry into management, governance and use of environmental water, Victoria](#).
- 18th-20th September: International Rivers Symposium, Brisbane

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.mldr@gmail.com