



Meeting Update

Murray Lower Darling Rivers Indigenous Nations

Meeting Details: MLDRIN Board Meeting
Date: 6 th and 7 th June 2019
Venue: Motel Goolwa, Goolwa, South Australia

Attendance
MLDRIN: Rene Woods (Nari Nari), Alice Williams (Wolgalu), Stewart Taylor (Wamba Wamba), Kingsley Abdulla (Maraura), Grant Rigney (Ngarrindjeri), Brendan Kennedy (Tati Tati) (before lunch on Day 1 only), Will Mooney (Executive Officer), Lauren Houtheyson (Cultural Flows Project Officer). Apologies: Peter Ingram (Wiradjuri), Jida Gulpilil (Dhudhuroa) Absent: Melissa Jones (Latji Latji) <u>Agency Staff:</u> Tony McCleod, Dina Mildren, Ken Scott, Briony Craven (MDBA), Mel White, Lachy Sutherland, Tim Hartman (SA DEW), Bryony Papps (CEWO), Rhonda Butcher (Alluvium) (other MDBA staff joined by phone link up)

Key issues discussed:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Directors Discussed a request from Western Australia Department of Water and Environmental Regulation for information and support to assist use of the Aboriginal Waterway Assessment tool with Bindjareb Noongar Elders in the development of a <i>Peel-Harvey Estuary Protection Plan</i>• Reviewed draft annual budget for 2019-20 Financial Year and discussed key projects for 2019-20 Directors received updates from MDBA and provided input on key projects and activities including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Basin Annual Environmental Watering Priorities and Basin Watering Strategy (BWS) (BWS). A review of the BWS is underway. The updates strategy will include reference to Aboriginal Environmental Outcomes. A fully revised BWS will be developed in 2022. Some states are also seeking to engage with First Nations regarding the development and review of Long-Term Watering Plans.• Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder (CEWO) is developing an Indigenous Engagement Strategy. CEWO will convene a working group to help co-design the strategy. CEWO are undertaking a stocktake of their engagement activities and looking to improve how they engage and work with First Nations.

- Directors reviewed the MDBA's renewed Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) and provided comments. MDBA has committed to improve implementation of [their RAP](#) over the next three years.
- MDBA provided an update on the appointment of an [Indigenous member to the Board of the MDBA](#). Once Federal Parliament resumed in July it is likely that the legislation to create the Indigenous standing position will be passed and expression interest will be sought.
- Rhonda Butcher (Alluvium) provided an update on the development of the Basin Science Platform. The Platform will Identify and prioritise knowledge gaps relating to the science underpinning the implementation of the Basin Plan. Directors expressed concern about the unrealistic timeframes proposed for development. Directors agreed that MLDRIN's input would be restricted to identifying appropriate protocols for engagement.
- Basin Plan 2020 Evaluation: a workshop was held on 12th June to identify options for First Nations inclusion in the [2020 Evaluation of the Basin Plan](#).
- Native Fish Recovery Strategy: MDBA is leading development of a business case for a new recovery strategy, [which has been prompted by the mass fish deaths in 2018/19](#). MLDRIN and NBAN reps have provided input to the development of a Draft Business Case, which outlined process for development of the full strategy. Strategy funds are currently being used in urgent population sampling and habitat mapping in the Lower Darling.
- Directors discussed the importance of responding to climate change issues and impacts on river health and cultural values. MLDRIN will identify a climate change contact and work on input to the [MDBA's climate change discussion paper](#).
- Water Resource Plans. MDBA has 12 WRPs currently under assessment. NSW is expected to deliver WRPs in three tranches. NSW is still significantly behind projected timelines for completion of WRPs.
- South Australian Department of Environment and Water reps provided an update on collaborative work progressing Aboriginal Water Interests. There is an increasing focus on implementing water resource plans and securing the role of Traditional Owner advisory bodies.

Key resolutions and decisions:

- Directors reviewed and approved minutes of previous Board Meetings, finance reports and correspondence register for the period since the April 2019 Board Meeting.
- Directors agreed to amend MLDRIN's employment policy to ensure all participants are covered by WorkSafe insurance. All participants in all MLDRIN projects will be required to sign up as casual employees.
- The Board set the following dates and locations for MLDRIN Full Gatherings and Board Meetings for 2019-20. Full details will be determined by staff in the coming months.
- [Full Gatherings](#): 2019 AGM (November 2019): Renmark or Berri, SA. Full Gathering (March/April 2020): Yarrowonga, VIC.
- [Board Meetings](#): September 2019, Bathurst NSW. February 2020: Melbourne

VIC.

- The Board agreed on an approach to implementation of the Cultural Flows Program. MLDRIN will adopt a targeted approach, ensuring that all Nations can access project funding based on their current preferences and capacity. MLDRIN's Cultural Flows Project Officer will be in touch with all Nation representatives.
- Directors agreed that all Directors will be required to demonstrate eligibility by provide Police Checks and through a review of the Bankruptcy Register
- Directors reviewed and approved formal responses to complaints, following advice from the Complaints Handling Subcommittee.

Key upcoming dates

- 30th June 2019: original Basin Plan deadline for accreditation of all Water Resource Plans
- 20th and 21st June: National Carp Control Plan workshop, Canberra
- 8th July 2019: Victorian AWA Practitioners Forum, Bendigo
- 7th – 12th July: NAIDOC Week (Numerous events across all Basin regions)
- November 2019: MLDRIN AGM, Berri or Renmark South Australia

If you have any questions about anything raised in this update please feel free to contact Will Mooney on **0404 163 700** or Kaleana Reyland on **0407031180** or email: **executiveofficer.mldrin@gmail.com**