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Water recovery in the Murray-Darling Basin

The health of the Murray-Darling Basin is crucial to the wellbeing of Australian communities, industries and the environment. Over time, as our population and agricultural needs have grown, the amount of water being diverted from the river system became unsustainable and the health of the Basin began to decline.

The [Murray-Darling Basin Plan](#) sets water recovery targets to bring the Basin back to a sustainable level of environmental health while continuing to support agriculture and securing the future of Basin communities.

Development of a framework, focussing on water recovery to bridge the gap to the Sustainable Diversion Limits, is under development. It is expected to be released in early 2023, as agreed at the [Murray-Darling Basin Ministerial Council meeting held in October 2022](#).

Water recovery targets

Current Murray-Darling Basin water recovery targets were determined through years of research and analysis based in:

- environmental science
- social and economic analysis
- historical data analysis
- and modelling of future scenarios.

This research and analysis identified a maximum amount of water that could be diverted from the Basin while maintaining environmental sustainability – this is called the Sustainable Diversion Limit (SDL). Water recovery targets were then set by comparing the Sustainable Diversion Limit to a baseline.