



Australian Government



Inspector-
General of
Water
Compliance

Murray–Darling Basin community perceptions research 2022

Findings relating to the Basin Plan

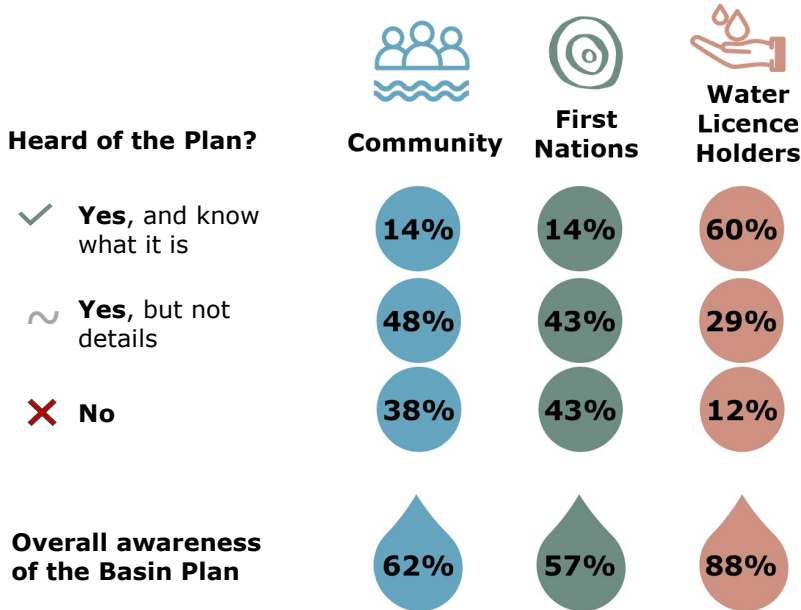


Awareness, support and perceptions



A key element in understanding the importance of proper water management in the Murray–Darling Basin is ensuring stakeholders know and understand the Basin Plan. While most survey participants were aware of the Basin Plan, they were not aware of the details. Most community member respondents didn't think they were directly affected by the Basin Plan. However, those who were aware of the Basin Plan's details were largely supportive of it.

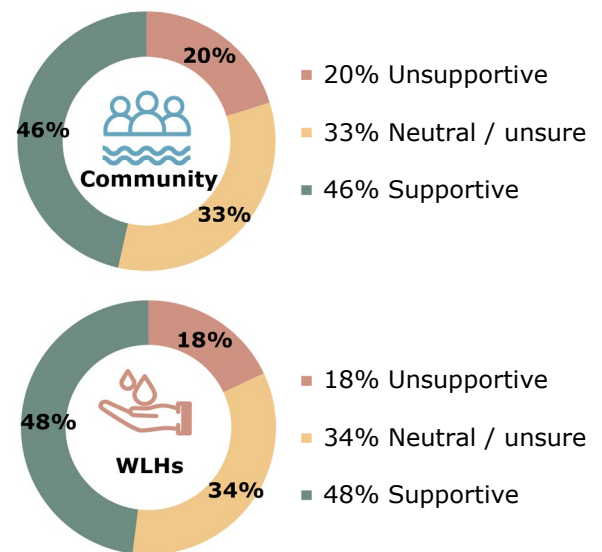
Awareness of the Basin Plan



Q21. Have you heard of the Murray–Darling Basin Plan?
Base: Community (n=817), First Nations (n=56), WLH (n=200)

Support for the Basin Plan

Among those who were aware of details of the MDB plan

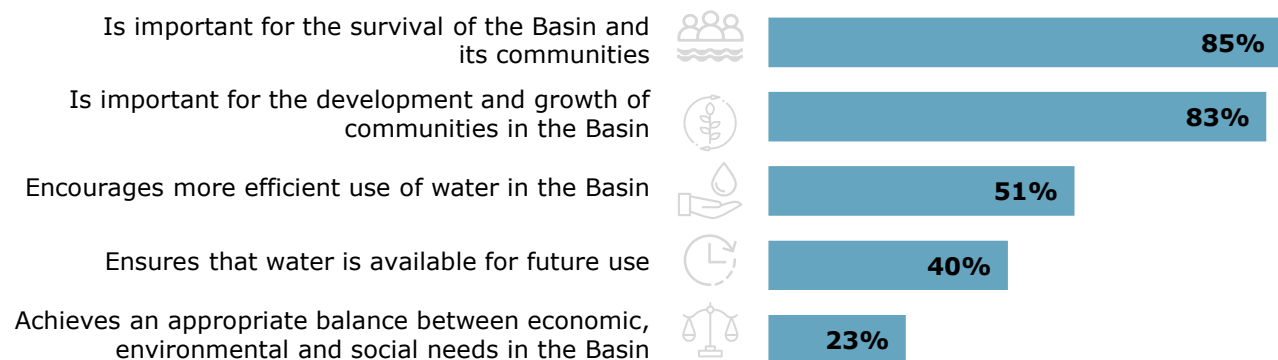


Q24. Overall, thinking about the Murray–Darling Basin Plan, how supportive are you of the Plan? Note: Unsupportive = Not at all supportive / Not supportive, Neutral / Unsure = Neither supportive nor unsupportive / Don't know / not sure, Supportive = Supportive / Very supportive. Base: Aware of details about MDB Plan – Community (n=120), WLH (n=122)

Community perceptions of the Basin Plan

(% agree of those who were aware of details of the Plan)

The Basin Plan...



Q23. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements about the Murray–Darling Basin Plan.
Base: Community, aware of details about MDB Plan (n=120)



Awareness and relevance of the Basin Plan

Most **water licence holder (88%)** respondents , around **six in ten community member (62%)** respondents and just over half of **First Nations (57%)** respondents were aware of the Basin Plan (the Plan). However, many respondents were not aware of the details of the Plan, and most community member respondents did not consider themselves to be directly affected by it. This suggests information about the Plan would lack relevance and personal affinity among these audiences, who would therefore be less likely to engage with it. However, knowledge of the Plan will be important for establishing the relevance of compliance and enforcement activities across the Basin.

Perceptions and support for the Basin Plan

Approximately half of the people surveyed supported the Basin Plan. There also exists **an opportunity to inform about a third of survey participants who are neutral/ unsure**. The majority of community members who were fully aware of the Plan felt it was **important to have a plan for the Basin and its communities' survival, development and growth**. However, lower support was identified for particular elements of the Plan and/ or its implementation.



Components within the Plan impacting perceptions

Perceptions of the effectiveness of the Murray–Darling Basin Plan were **influenced by the range** of components included within it, of which compliance and enforcement was just one. This suggests that **improving community sentiment in relation to compliance and enforcement in the Basin alone will have only minimal impact** on the overall perceived effectiveness of water management in the Murray–Darling Basin more broadly.

Components impacting perceptions of the overall water management in the Basin:

- **Division of water**
Amount of water in the system, water allocations, entitlements and Sustainable Diversion Limits.
- **Water operations and infrastructure**
Working effectively and efficiently.
- **Communications and engagement**
About water management decisions and outcomes.
- **Water for the environment and cultural flows**
Adequate water set aside and used effectively.
- **Water markets**
Operating effectively, efficiently and fairly.
- **Monitoring and evaluation of the Plan outcomes**
And communicating outcomes to the public.
- **Compliance and enforcement**