



Australian Government



Inspector-
General of
Water
Compliance

Murray–Darling Basin community perceptions research 2024–25

Understanding the Audience





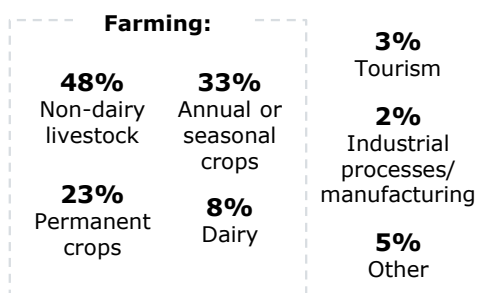
Water licence holders

Results among water licence holders were broadly consistent with those seen previously. Confidence in compliance and enforcement remains steady, while perceived performance of the Inspector-General is down slightly.

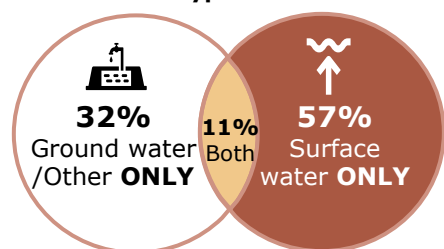
"Farmers are increasingly more careful because we know the value of water"—Water licence holder, Renmark

Demographics

Type of water use



Water licence types:

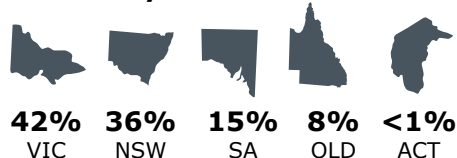


Surface water licence types:

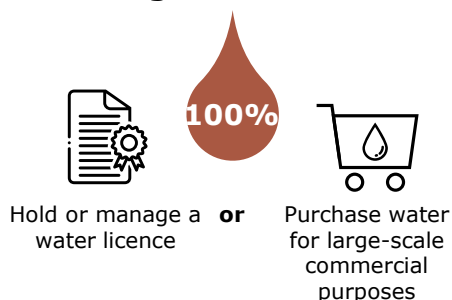


(7% Other/ unsure)

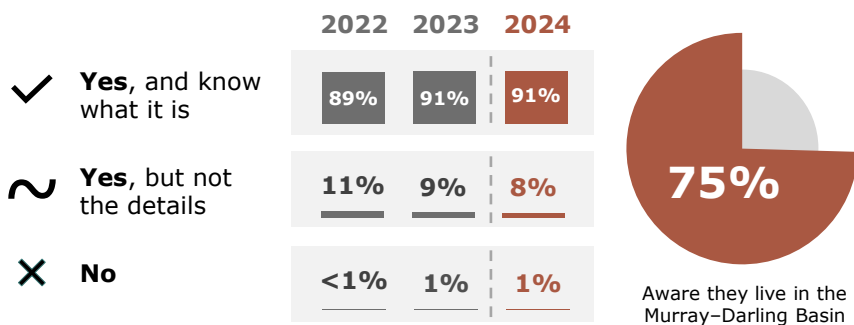
Where they live



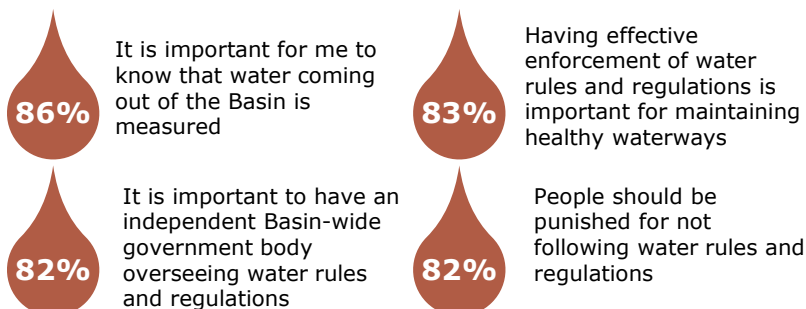
Defining characteristics



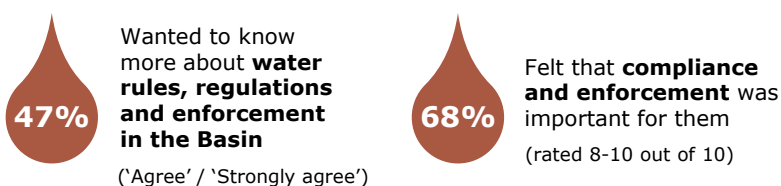
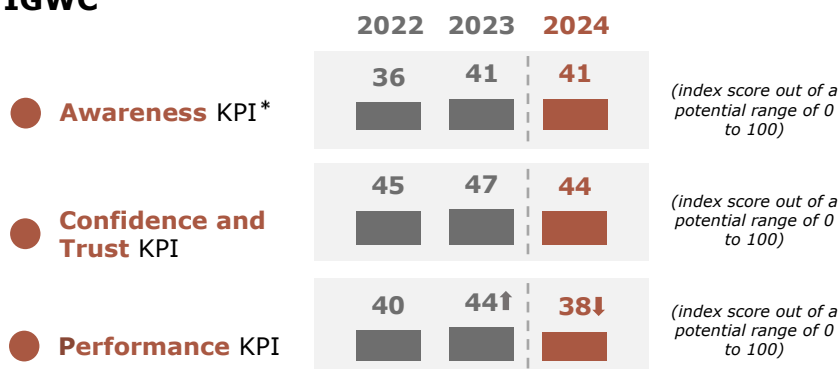
Heard of the Basin?



Top perceptions: Water licence holders tended to agree that...



IGWC



Base: WLH (2024: Ranged from n=122 to 203, 2023: n=214, 2022: n=200).

*Estimated value used for WLHs' 2024 Awareness KPI results —more information in the Project overview and Research Methodology. Note: Arrows indicate results are significantly higher or lower than the previous year (at a 90% Confidence level).



Basin community

Basin community respondents tended to have relatively low levels of understanding about the Basin and varying levels of interest and engagement with waterways and water management. Compared to 2023, findings relating to the Basin community remained broadly consistent.

"I don't know how they police [water usage]... I don't think it's spoken about clearly to a regular person"—Younger community member, Tamworth

Demographics

Gender

49%
Male



51%
Female

<1% Other/Prefer not to say

Age

18-34 years 27%

35-54 years 31%

55+ years 42%

Where they live



37% NSW 28% VIC 18% ACT 11% QLD 6% SA

26%
Northern
Basin



74%
Southern
Basin



57%
Metropolitan, regional
centre or large rural town



43%
Smaller rural town/
remote community

Heard of the Basin?

✓ Yes, and know what it is

2022 2023 2024

61% 60% 59%

~ Yes, but not the details

34% 35% 35%

✗ No

5% 5% 6%

28%

Aware they live in the Murray-Darling Basin

Top perceptions: Basin community respondents tended to agree that...

80%

Having effective enforcement of water rules and regulations is important for maintaining healthy waterways

78%

People should be punished for not following water rules and regulations

76%

It is important to have an independent Basin-wide government body overseeing water rules and regulations

75%

The whole community benefits when the water rules and regulations are followed

IGWC

2022 2023 2024

● Awareness KPI

15 16 15

(index score out of a potential range of 0 to 100)

● Confidence and Trust KPI

36 39↑ 39

(index score out of a potential range of 0 to 100)

● Performance KPI

31 35↑ 34

(index score out of a potential range of 0 to 100)

48%

Wanted to know more about **water rules, regulations and enforcement in the Basin**

('Agree' / 'Strongly agree')

57%

Felt that **compliance and enforcement** was important for them

(rated 8-10 out of 10)

Base: Basin community (2024: n=865, 2023: n=800, 2022: n=817).

Note: Arrows indicate results are significantly higher or lower than the previous year (at a 90% Confidence level).



First Nations Community

First Nations community respondents tended to feel more negatively about water management than the overall Basin community. They were more likely to indicate concerns about compliance, and more likely to actively seek information on the topic.

"I want to know it's being managed and that those doing the wrong thing are being told off and shamed"—First Nations community member, Broken Hill

Demographics

Gender

48%
Male



51%
Female

1% Other/Prefer not to say

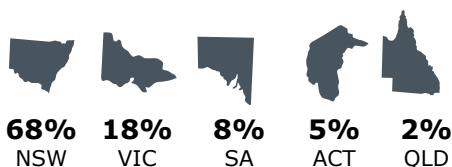
Age

18-34 years 42%

35-54 years 33%

55+ years 25%

Where they live



52%
Northern
Basin



48%
Southern
Basin



25%

Metropolitan, regional
centre or large rural town



75%

Smaller rural town/
remote community

Heard of the Basin?

✓ Yes, and know what it is 57%

~ Yes, but not the details 33%

✗ No 11%

31%

Aware they live in the
Murray-Darling Basin

Top perceptions: First Nations community respondents tended to agree that...

79%

People should be
punished for not
following water rules
and regulations

74%

Having effective
enforcement of water
rules and regulations is
important for maintaining
healthy waterways

73%

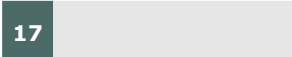
The whole community
benefits when the
water rules and
regulations are
followed

71%

Knowing that water rules
and regulations are being
enforced would reassure
me

IGWC

● Awareness KPI



(index score out of a
potential range of 0
to 100)

● Confidence and
Trust KPI



(index score out of a
potential range of 0
to 100)

● Performance KPI



(index score out of a
potential range of 0
to 100)

55%

Wanted to know
more about **water
rules, regulations
and enforcement
in the Basin**

('Agree' / 'Strongly agree')

52%

Felt that **compliance
and enforcement** was
important for them

(rated 8-10 out of 10)

Base: First Nations community respondents (n=82).