

Know the facts: Floodplain harvesting

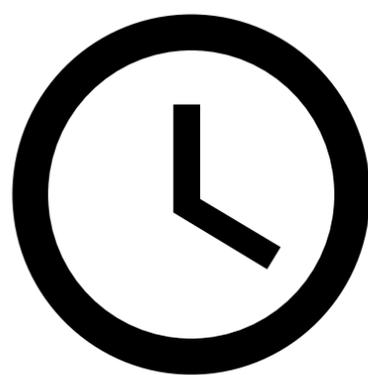


1.) WHAT IT IS

Floodplain harvesting is the taking of **water flowing overland** and across a floodplain. It is **already an approved and legal practice**, dating back decades. It is a very important part of the overall water resource mix across north-western NSW.

2.) WATER REGULATION IN STAGED TRANSITION

Since the introduction of the Water Management Act 2000 (in 2004), the NSW Government began **reforming the management** of the state's rural water. This has been a **staged transition**, with the conversion of regulated river licences the first major task, then groundwater, unregulated licences and **now floodplain harvesting**.

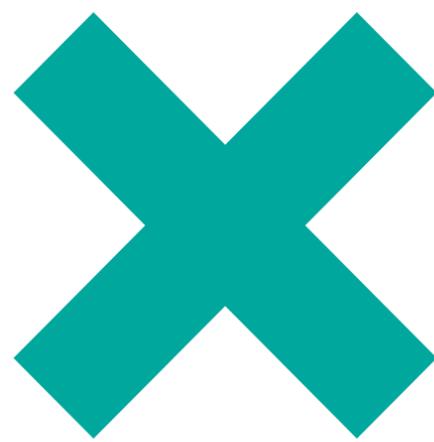


3.) NO INCREASED EXTRACTIONS

The policy which authorises the issuing of licences is explicit that **it cannot lead to increased water extractions** over existing water sharing plan limits.

4.) THIS IS NOT NEW

The take of floodplain-harvested water has been built into the baseline diversion limits used to make the Murray-Darling Basin Plan. Floodplain harvesting will be fully accounted for under the Basin Plan's sustainable diversion limits - **this is not new or additional water extraction**.



5.) APPROVALS NEEDED

Irrigators will be **issued with Works Approvals** for works used to take floodplain-harvested water.

6.) LICENSING DETAILS

- Irrigators will be issued with a **volumetric licence** which will, to a large degree, reflect their historical usage.
- The other feature is **standardising the rules around structures located on a floodplain** through the implementation of valley-wide Floodplain Management Plans. This includes the inspection of all work identified on the floodplain both on irrigation and non-irrigation farms.



7.) OTHER LICENSING DETAILS



- Total valley **water use cannot exceed what is allowed** under existing water sharing plan limits which are below 1993/94 Murray- Darling Basin Cap limits.
- Only **works constructed prior to July 2008** will be eligible for approvals.
- **No growth in water used** across individual valleys is allowed.

8.) COMPLIANCE

Compliance will occur at an **individual and valley level** and will include floodplain works as well as measurement of volumetric take.



9.) FLOODPLAIN-HARVESTED WATER BUILT INTO PROPERTY VALUE



Volumetric entitlements will be tradeable, and therefore will have a monetary value; however, up until issue, the value of floodplain harvesting has been built into the value of the irrigator's property. It will now be **a stand-alone value**.

10.) A WORK IN PROGRESS

- The **NSW Floodplain Harvesting Policy has been a work in progress** for more than the past decade. It was developed by both sides of politics, and is now in the final stages of implementation.
- Not only is the NSW licensing of floodplain harvesting **fully consistent with the Basin Plan**, the implementation is being largely funded by the Federal Government as part of the Basin Plan.



11.) QUEENSLAND HAS SIMILAR REGULATIONS



- Take of Overland Flow (or Floodplain Harvesting) is also an important part of the water resource in Queensland, where it is **regulated in a similar manner** to what is being introduced in NSW.

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