

# Submission Questionnaire

Draft Macquarie-Castlereagh Regional Water Strategy - Submission Form



## Regional Water Strategies Public Exhibition Submission Questionnaire

*The NSW Government is taking action to improve the security, reliability, quality and resilience of the state's water resources. The Macquarie-Castlereagh Regional Water Strategy will deliver healthy and resilient water resources for a liveable and prosperous regional NSW.*

This draft strategy is being developed by the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment and provides an opportunity to re-shape what we are doing in regional water management and chart a path forward.

We have been working with local water utilities, councils, communities, Aboriginal people and other stakeholders to ensure local and traditional knowledge informs the draft Macquarie-Castlereagh Regional Water Strategy and that it serves the regional community, including First Nations, the environment and industry.

### Your Voice is important

We have prepared this draft strategy to continue our discussions with you. We would like to hear your views on the draft strategy as a whole including the process we used to develop the strategy and the evidence that supports it. We are also seeking your feedback on the options presented in the draft strategy and whether you have any further information that could help us to assess the benefits and disadvantages of any of the options.

Please provide your feedback in the submission form below and email your completed submission to [regionalwater.strategies@dpie.nsw.gov.au](mailto:regionalwater.strategies@dpie.nsw.gov.au) or post to Regional Water Strategies, Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, Locked Bag 5022, Parramatta NSW 2124 by **13 November, 2020**.

The questionnaire includes general questions about the regional water strategy including objectives, vision, modelling, opportunities and challenges. It also includes questions regarding the draft options along with personal information questions.

The questionnaire will take approximately 15 minutes to complete and your response can remain anonymous if you wish (see question 3).

Questions marked with an asterisk (\*) require an answer.

If you have any questions about the questionnaire, please email:  
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### 1. Information on confidentiality and privacy \*

I give my permission for my submission to be publicly available on the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment website.

Yes                  No

I would like my personal details to be kept confidential.

Yes                  No

## 2. Your details

Email address \*

Name \*

Address \*

Contact phone number \*

Do you identify as an Aboriginal person?

Yes

No

Are you an individual or representing an organisation?

Individual

Organisation

## 3. Organisation or business details

Who do you represent?

**Government:**

Commonwealth

New South Wales

State other

Local

**Local Water Utility**

**Peak representative organisation:**

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**Other**

## 4. Draft regional water strategy objectives and vision

The draft Macquarie-Castlereagh Regional Water Strategy is one of 13 strategies (12 regional water strategies and a Greater Sydney Water Strategy) being developed by the department. All regional water strategies are being developed in line with the following objectives.

- **Deliver and manage water for local communities**
  - Improve water security, water quality and flood management for regional towns and communities.
- **Enable economic prosperity**
  - Improve water access reliability for regional industries.
- **Recognise and protect Aboriginal water rights, interests and access to water**
  - Including Aboriginal heritage assets.
- **Protect and enhance the environment**
  - Improve the health and integrity of environmental systems and assets, including by improving water quality.
- **Affordability**
  - Identify least cost policy and infrastructure options.

All draft regional water strategy options need to address at least one of the above objectives. Our vision for this strategy is to have healthy and resilient water resources (that withstand extreme events and adapt to these changes) for a liveable and prosperous Macquarie-Castlereagh region.

To achieve this, we need to position the region so there is the right amount of water of the right quality, delivered in the right way to meet the future needs of Aboriginal people, towns, communities, industries and the environment.

**Do you support this vision for the Macquarie-Castlereagh Regional Water Strategy?**

Yes

No

**If no, please outline your vision for the long term management of water resources in this region?**

## **5. Information and modelling used to develop the Macquarie-Castlereagh Regional Water Strategy**

The draft Macquarie-Castlereagh Regional Water Strategy packages the most up to date information and evidence with all the tools we have – policy, planning, behavioural, regulatory, technology and infrastructure solutions.

We have used the following information to develop the draft Macquarie-Castlereagh Regional Water Strategy.

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  - Observed historical climate data - recorded rainfall, temperature and evaporation data.
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  - Climate drivers – key drivers of wet and dry periods.
- **Review of existing studies**
  - to identify drivers and risks for water resource management.
- **Community engagement:**
  - Local councils and joint council organisations.
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  - Review of previous water management consultations.

**A) Do you have any comments about the information used to develop this strategy?**

**B) Please provide details if there is additional information you think we should consider?**

## 6. Stochastic modelling method

We used a stochastic modelling method (based on the statistical characteristics of the new climate data) in order to get a dataset covering up to 10,000 years. This enables us to quantify the natural variability and extremes in the region with greater certainty.

**A) Do you have any comments about the modelling method used to develop this strategy?**

**B) Is there any additional information that you believe could help us assess the benefits and disadvantages of draft options?**

## 7. Opportunities and challenges for water management in the Macquarie-Castlereagh region

During the Macquarie-Castlereagh Regional Water Strategy drafting stage, the following opportunities, risks and challenges were identified.

- **Climate conditions combined with current operation assumptions are placing the region's water resources under stress**
  - Region has a naturally variable climate that needs to be planned for.
  - Decreased inflows to dams in the region.
  - Increased potential for droughts.
  - Challenges in delivering water to the end of the system.
- **Need to rethink how we manage water in the region**
  - Improved understanding of extreme events needs to be included in water allocations.
  - Greater transparency about water security risks.
  - New water infrastructure needs to support population growth centres.
  - New measures to reduce demand and improve water efficiency is needed.
  - Rethink the types of industries in the region to reduce water demand and use water more efficiently.
- **Water is essential for Aboriginal people's health, wellbeing and connection to Country:**
  - The health of the waterways impacts wellbeing.
  - Current cultural water entitlements do not meet the needs of Aboriginal people.
  - Opportunities to include Aboriginal people's involvement in water management.

- **Critical environmental assets need to be protected**
  - Healthy water sources support the region’s environment.
  - River ecosystems are under stress.
  - Future actions should support environmental outcomes across the whole system including the Macquarie Marshes.
- **Better management of groundwater**
  - Groundwater sources are critical and need to be used more efficiently.
  - More knowledge is needed about groundwater recharge rates.

**A) Do you have any comments on the opportunities, risks and challenges identified?**

**B) Are there any additional opportunities, risks and challenges that we should consider and what options could address these?**

## **8. Draft Macquarie-Castlereagh Regional Water Strategy options**

We have developed a long list of options that could be included in the final Macquarie-Castlereagh Regional Water Strategy. The options consider the opportunities and challenges facing the region and meet at least one regional water strategy objective.

The 49 options are grouped in different categories, being:

- maintaining and diversifying water supplies.
- protecting and enhancing natural ecosystems.
- Supporting water use efficiency and conservation.
- strengthening community preparedness for climate extremes.
- improving recognition of Aboriginal people’s water rights, interests and access to water.

Only feasible options will be progressed to the final strategy stage – following a rigorous assessment process. We are seeking your feedback to inform the options assessment process.

Draft options for the Macquarie-Castlereagh Regional Water Strategy are outlined below.

### **Maintaining and diversifying water supplies**

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|--|--|
| 1. A new mid system re-regulating weir on the Macquarie River                    | 7. Reuse, recycling and stormwater projects                              |
| 2. Access water from Burrendong Dam's deep storage                               | 8. Burrendong Dam to Nyngan pipeline                                     |
| 3. Managed aquifer recharge investigations and policy                            | 9. Pipeline from the proposed new mid-system weir near Gin Gin to Nyngan |
| 4. Improving town water security in the upper Macquarie unregulated river system | 10. Gunningbar Creek pipeline  |
| 5. Drought protocols for Bathurst and Oberon town water supply                   | 11. Increase Burrendong Dam's Full Supply Level                          |
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### **Protecting and enhancing natural ecosystems**

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| 14. Address channel constraints to delivering environmental flows to the Macquarie Marshes                              | 23. Modification and/or removal of existing floodwork structures causing adverse impacts |
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### **Supporting water use and delivery efficiency**

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| 32. End of system efficient stock and domestic water delivery options | 34. Market measures to support Dubbo's town water supply |
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## Strengthening community preparedness for climate extremes

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| 35. Investigation of licence conversions                              | 39. Capacity building program:<br>- new climate data/modelling          |
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| 42. Culturally appropriate water knowledge program             | 46. Water portfolio project for Aboriginal communities       |
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### A) Which five (5) options do you think are **most** important?

Please list the option numbers in order of importance with the first option being most important

- Option Number
- Option Number
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### B) Please comment on why you think these options are most important?

### C) Which five (5) options do you think are **least** important (if any)?

Please list the option numbers in order of least importance with the first option being least important

- Option Number
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**D) Please comment on why you think these options are least important?**

**E) Do you have any comments on the draft options?**

## **9. Option combinations**

The option list provided in the draft strategy also identifies potential combinations of options. These combinations recognise that most options require associated works, further assessments and/or legislative, policy and planning changes to ensure they address the risks and challenges identified in the Macquarie-Castlereagh region and do not have unintended impacts.

**A) Do you have any thoughts on how the options could be combined with other options?**

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## **10. Other comments**

**Do you have any other comments about the Macquarie-Castlereagh Regional Water Strategy?**

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We are interested to know how you heard about the opportunity to make a submission. Please indicate the communication methods below:

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Have your say NSW Government website

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## **12. Additional Information and submission process**

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### A) Which five (5) options do you think are **most** important?

Please list the option numbers in order of importance with the first option being most important

Option Number  
Option Number  
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Option Number

### B) Please comment on why you think these options are most important?

### C) Which five (5) options do you think are **least** important (if any)?

Please list the option numbers in order of least importance with the first option being least important

Option Number  
Option Number  
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**D) Please comment on why you think these options are least important?**

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## **9. Option combinations**

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