## Our performance information

Our performance information describes how we intend to measure our success in achieving our purpose. Our performance is reported in our annual report. We measure and report on our performance to track progress against our purpose and objectives. In doing so we demonstrate accountability to our ministers and the Australian Government and, through them, to the Parliament, the Australian public and our stakeholders.

### Purpose

Partnering and regulating to enhance Australia's agriculture, unique environment and heritage, and water resources.

### Objectives

The department measures specific outcomes that in combination are key performance indicators that show we are on track to achieve our objectives. The achievement of our objectives ensures that our work supports the department in achieving its purpose.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Agriculture** | **Environment and Heritage** | **Biosecurity** | **Water Resources** | **Antarctic** |
| Assist industry to grow to a $100 billion agricultural sector by 2030 | Support stewardship and sustainable management to enhance Australia's environment and our unique heritage | Manage biosecurity risks to Australian agriculture, the environment and our way of life | Support the sustainable management and productive use of Australia's water resources | Advance Australia's strategic, scientific and environmental interests in the Antarctic and the Southern Ocean |

### Objectives and performance criteria

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Agriculture – Assist industry to grow to a $100 billion agricultural sector by 2030** | | | |
| Increase, improve and maintain markets | Encourage and reduce risks to agricultural productivity | Forecasting and strategic intelligence | The efficient collection and distribution of levies to fund rural research and development |

| **Environment and Heritage – Support stewardship and sustainable management to enhance Australia's environment and our unique heritage** | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Ecosystem diversity, extent and function are maintained or improved | Species diversity, range and abundance are maintained or improved | Heritage is recognised and protected | Development is ecologically sustainable and impacts to the environment and human health are managed | Produce scientific research on the environment and resource development | Provide national leadership to effectively manage Australia's waste |

| **Biosecurity – Manage biosecurity risks to Australian agriculture, the environment and our way of life** | |
| --- | --- |
| The national biosecurity system meets the agreed national goals and objectives of the Intergovernmental Agreement on Biosecurity | Regulation, partnerships and service delivery manage biosecurity risk |

| **Water Resources – Support the sustainable management and productive use of Australia's water resources** | |
| --- | --- |
| Support sustainable use and maintenance of high-quality water resources | Water quality and flows, and ecosystem health are maintained or improved |

|  |
| --- |
| **Antarctic – Advance Australia's strategic, scientific and environmental interests in the Antarctic and the Southern Ocean** |
| Strengthen Australia's leadership in Antarctica and the Southern Ocean, by conducting world-leading science, promoting environmental best practice, and developing economic, educational and collaborative opportunities |

### Performance criteria and measures

#### Agriculture objective

**Assist industry to grow to a $100 billion agricultural sector by 2030**

| Performance criteria | 2020–21 measure | 2021–22 measure | 2022–23 measure | 2023–24 measure | Context |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Increase, improve and maintain markets | Growth in agricultural commodity exports in markets for which the department has negotiated improved market access exceeds average export growth | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | Context: The department works to provide opportunities for primary producers to export their commodities. We are involved in negotiations with other countries to establish trade agreements, and we work with trading partners to establish and amend protocols to ensure that Australian agricultural exports meet importing country requirements.  With these arrangements in place, the value of agricultural commodity exports is subject to factors that are outside the department's control. These include the effect of the climate on production conditions, changes in the global economy affecting currency movements, consumer demand and commodity prices, and the business decisions of primary producers and exporters.  Arrangements to increase, improve and maintain markets are also implemented over the medium to long term. As a result, there is a lag between the department's activities to open or improve market access, the commencement of trade in those markets and the results in terms of increased export values.  The department's objective is to gain, improve, maintain and restore access to international markets for primary producers. |
| Number of disruptions to existing export markets resolved through the department's negotiation and advocacy work | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 |

| Performance criteria | 2020–21 measure | 2021–22 measure | 2022–23 measure | 2023–24 measure | Context |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Encourage and reduce risks to agricultural productivity | Average annual productivity growth for the past 10 years is equal to or exceeds average annual market sector productivity growth over the same period | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | **Context:** The department works to provide a policy and regulatory environment in which primary producers can build their productivity. We also support research, development and extension to promote innovation in agriculture and in agribusiness management. We partner with states and industry to support Australia's favourable biosecurity and food safety status.  Within this environment, agricultural productivity is subject to factors that are outside the department's control. These include the effect of the climate on production conditions. Factors that are partly within the department's control are business decisions by primary producers, which can be influenced by policies, information on risks like climate change, and programs.  The outcomes from research and development and from business decisions are delivered over the medium to long term. As a result, there is a lag between the department's activities and the results in terms of increased productivity.  The department is supporting the government's agenda to modernise the agricultural innovation system and drive a step-change in productivity growth. This includes partnering with the rural research and development corporations to strengthen coordination and collaboration, increase private sector investment into the system and achieve greater uptake of innovation. |

| Performance criteria | 2020–21 measure | 2021–22 measure | 2022–23 measure | 2023–24 measure | Context |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Forecasting and strategic intelligence | Outcomes are consistent with forecasts, allowing for unforeseeable events | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | **Context:** The department's forecasting and strategic intelligence activities provide data and advice to inform primary producers and industries, and to support our policy work, program development and regulatory activities.  This function will be measured by comparing the department's economic and scientific forecasts and predictions to actual results over time. |

| Performance criteria | 2020–21 measure | 2021–22 measure | 2022–23 measure | 2023–24 measure | Context |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| The efficient collection and distribution of levies to fund rural research and development | Levy collection processes cost no more than 1.2% of levies disbursed | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | **Context:** The department is responsible for collecting industry levies and providing them to rural research and development corporations to fund their work. There are currently 113 levies on 77 commodities and we disburse levies to 18 recipient bodies.  The department supports the integrity of the levies system through a risk-based compliance program. We publish semi-annual reports for stakeholders, to provide an overview of the administration of the levies scheme, including collection costs and charges, and the disbursement of levies.  The department is working to modernise and streamline the agricultural levies legislative framework. This project will reduce complexity and duplication in the legislation and improve the transparency and usability of the legislation for industry and government. |
| Inspections of levy agent records cover at least 20% of levy revenue over a 3-year rolling average | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 |

#### Environment and Heritage objective

**Support stewardship and sustainable management to enhance Australia's environment and our unique heritage**

| Performance criteria | 2020–21 measure | 2021–22 measure | 2022–23 measure | 2023–24 measure | Context |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Ecosystem diversity, extent and function are maintained or improved | A reduction in nutrient, sediment and pesticide loads consistent with meeting targets in the Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | **Context:** Great Barrier Reef ecosystems continue to be in poor condition largely due to climate change impacts such as the 2016, 2017 and 2019 coral bleaching events and the collective impact of run-off associated with past and ongoing agricultural land use, coastal development activities and extreme weather events. Improving water quality contributes to the Reef's resilience. Measuring the nutrient and sediment loads gives us an indication of the impact on water quality on the Reef.  Note: Water quality targets in the Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan include:  60% reduction in anthropogenic end-of-catchment dissolved inorganic nitrogen loads (by 2025)  20% reduction in anthropogenic end-of-catchment particulate nutrient loads (by 2025)  25% reduction in anthropogenic end-of-catchment fine sediments loads (by 2025). |
| Habitat condition within major vegetation groups improves relative to baseline | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | **Context:** Tracking change in the condition, connectivity and extent of habitats is important to determine the effectiveness of policy, regulatory, adaptation and program interventions to improve native ecosystems, and the species they support. Reporting on these related indices against the 33 National Vegetation Information System major vegetation groups provides a logical sub-national breakdown and relates to long-established approaches to reporting in the State of the Environment reports and elsewhere.  While Australian Government policy, regulatory and program interventions should influence performance against these criteria, changes in condition, connectivity and extent of habitats will be influenced by a range of other factors, including state and territory government interventions and other stakeholder actions, as well as natural variation and random events.  Australia is committed to implementing its obligations under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in accordance with national priorities. Australia's Aichi Biodiversity Targets under the CBD include protecting terrestrial areas and inland waters. Reporting on this target gives an indication of national action taken to improve the extent of protected ecosystems. |
| Habitat connectivity within major vegetation groups improves relative to baseline | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 |
| Extent of major vegetation groups is maintained | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 |
| Terrestrial and inland water in protected areas – targets to be specified following agreement of the post-2020 agenda under the Convention on Biological Diversity | N/A | N/A | N/A |

| Performance criteria | 2020–21 measure | 2021–22 measure | 2022–23 measure | 2023–24 measure | Context |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Species diversity, range and abundance are maintained or improved | Threatened Bird Index improves relative to 2019–20 baseline | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | **Context:** Threatened Bird Index  The Threatened Bird Index provides an annual indicator of the change in threatened bird populations for approximately 28% of Australia's threatened bird species for which data are available. The Threatened Bird Index may include additional species over time as monitoring improves. Threatened species indices are being developed for mammals and plants and may be included as performance criteria in the future. The Threatened Bird Index was developed by the National Environmental Science Program's Threatened Species Recovery Hub.  While Australian Government policy, regulatory and program interventions should influence performance against this criterion, changes in the Threatened Bird Index will be influenced by a range of other factors, including state and territory government interventions and other stakeholder actions, as well as natural variation and random events.  Threatened species trajectories  The Threatened Species Strategy included a target to improve the trajectory of 20 mammals, 21 birds and 30 plants by June 2020. Improvements in the trajectories of priority threatened species will demonstrate the effectiveness of the government's investments in priority species and action areas and its partnerships with communities and state and territory governments to address species decline and support recovery. Improvements in the trajectory of a species will be assessed by comparing its estimated trajectory from 2005 to 2015 with its estimated trajectory from 2015 to 2020. Trajectory assessment will be reported on in 2020–21. This performance criterion may apply to other species in the future, as additional priorities for action and investment are identified.  This criterion is a sub-component of targets under the Threatened Species Strategy, which also includes targets to tackle feral cats and their impacts, improve recovery practices and protect Australia's plants through activities such as seedbanking.  Projects with improved environmental outcomes  The department's component of the Regional Land Partnerships program aims to achieve benefits for Wetlands of International Importance listed under the Ramsar Convention, threatened species, World Heritage properties and threatened ecological communities. Each project funded under the program is required to collect baseline information against which changes in environmental condition can be tracked over the 5-year life of the project. Indicators will vary but will include such things as vegetation condition or changes in the trajectory of a threatened species. Projects commenced in 2018–19 and will report on progress towards meeting long-term outcomes in 2021 and 2023. This reporting will enable the Australian Government to demonstrate the effectiveness of its investments in achieving environmental outcomes and will support adaptive management.  This performance criterion currently applies to projects funded through the Regional Land Partnerships program but may be applied to additional programs in the future that operate under a similar monitoring, evaluation, reporting and improvement framework. |
| Percentage of threatened species identified as priorities for action and investment showing improvements in their trajectory (100%) | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 |
| Percentage of natural resource management projects that demonstrate an improvement in environmental outcomes relative to the established project baseline (100%) | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 |

Note: Reporting against the 2020–21 performance criterion will be undertaken in line with reporting against the Threatened Species Strategy Year 5 targets. The strategy targets are set for 30 June 2020, and assessment and reporting will occur in 2020–21.

| **Performance criteria** | **2020–21 measure** | **2021–22 measure** | **2022–23 measure** | **2023–24 measure** | **Context** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Heritage is recognised and protected | Percentage of World Heritage listed properties being managed under management plans that are consistent with the management principles in the EPBC Regulations (100%) | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | **Context:** Management plans consistent with the EPBC Regulations provide a foundation for effective management of World Heritage and National Heritage listed properties. Measuring these performance criteria will support the effective management and protection of matters of national environmental significance. The department works with property managers to provide guidance on issues such as the effects of climate change and approaches for effective adaptation.  The department's role, through the Supervising Scientist, is to ensure that people and the environment of the Alligator Rivers Region remain protected from the effects of uranium mining. This region includes the World Heritage listed Kakadu National Park. |
| Increase in percentage from previous year of National Heritage listed properties being managed under management plans that are consistent with the management principles in the EPBC Regulations | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 |
| Number of times water quality in the Alligator Rivers Region exceeds statutory limits (0) | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 |
| Track changes against baseline dissimilarity values for biological communities in the Alligator Rivers Region | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 |

| Performance criteria | 2020–21 measure | 2021–22 measure | 2022–23 measure | 2023–24 measure | Context |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Development is ecologically sustainable and impacts to the environment and human health are managed | Reduction against baseline of non-compliant projects causing environmental harm | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | **Context:** The department is responsible for ensuring our regulatory systems are effective and efficient and that they deliver the benefit to the community that the government and Parliament intended. The department identifies annual compliance priorities that are set out in our compliance plan. This performance criterion will measure our compliance activities in relation to ecologically sustainable development. |
| Number of departments mapping climate risks and implementing climate risk strategies | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | **Context:** The department works across government and with state and territory governments to coordinate climate adaptation policies and action. This includes providing support (in the form of information and guidance), and partnering with agencies to develop effective policy responses. Governance mechanisms for this work include the Australian Government Disaster and Climate Resilience Reference Group which includes all Australian Government departments, and the Adaptation Working Group which includes representatives of all states and territories. This measure reflects the shared nature of adaptation and climate risk management and the need to work with all departments to integrate climate risks in their work. |
| Statutory timeframes are met 100% of the time for EPBC Act referral, assessment and approval decisions and the backlog of decisions is cleared. | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | Context: This target reflects the requirement that decisions and activities required by legislation are made within statutory timeframes to demonstrate regulation to identify, conserve and protect our biodiversity and heritage is effective and efficient. |
| Annual radiation dose to the public remains below 1 mSv | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | Context: The department's role, through the Supervising Scientist, is to ensure that people and the environment remain protected from the effects of uranium mining. This includes in the Alligator Rivers Region, which is recognised for its significant heritage values.  Radiological data are collected and assessed to ensure that environmental management systems are effective and appropriate for preventing impacts to human health. |

| Performance criteria | 2020–21 measure | 2021–22 measure | 2022–23 measure | 2023–24 measure | Context |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Produce scientific research on the environment and resource development | Completed NESP projects inform policy, adaptation, or management action, with a target of at least one user in all cases (100%)  NB: Projects include those from all 6 hubs and emerging priorities funding | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | **Context:** The primary purpose of NESP is to deliver collaborative, practical and applied research to inform decision-making and on-ground action.  The production of core national environmental-economic accounts will support evidence-based decisions by tracking stocks and flows in important environmental assets, and by allowing the interactions between the environment and the economy to be observed and better understood.  The department is responsible for the coordination of climate science through the National Climate Science Advisory Group which includes representatives of the key science agencies across government, academia and users of climate science information.  Geological and bioregional assessments directly inform strategic assessments under the EPBC Act, resulting in regulatory efficiency and regional-scale approvals that facilitate new gas to the East Coast Gas Market. |
| First phase national land and waste accounts and experimental ecosystem accounts are reviewed and refined based on consultation and testing for policy suitability  Scoping, design and development of second phase accounts has commenced | Continued expansion and refinement of national environmental-economic accounts | Continued expansion and refinement of national environmental-economic accounts | Continued expansion and refinement of national environmental-economic accounts |
| Impact and risk analysis reports for Geological Bioregional Assessment regions published | N/A | N/A | N/A |

| Performance criteria | 2020–21 measure | 2021–22 measure | 2022–23 measure | 2023–24 measure | Context |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Provide national leadership to effectively manage Australia's waste | Add to the list of priority chemicals and waste for which baselines are established | An improvement relative to baseline; to be measured and reflected in the annual report | An improvement relative to baseline; to be measured and reflected in the annual report | An improvement relative to baseline; to be measured and reflected in the annual report | **Context:** Some chemicals and wastes can cause environmental damage if not managed. Once released into the environment, they can cause harm to animals such as fish, birds and insects, as well as to soil microbes and plants. They can also have flow on effects for human health.  The success of regulatory interventions or standards-setting in reducing exposure to chemicals and waste can be established by measuring the amounts of these substances in the environment over time. Responsibility for managing chemicals and wastes is complex and some components rest with multiple Commonwealth, state, territory and local government agencies. While not having primary responsibility, the department has a role for assessment and management of chemicals and some wastes through a range of roles, including as the lead Australian agency for international agreements to reduce or eliminate some chemicals; and as the lead agency for some national product stewardship schemes.  Australia's key policy to reduce emissions of ozone depleting chemicals and synthetic greenhouse gas is to gradually reduce the amount of these chemicals permitted to be imported, through controls under the *Ozone Protection and Synthetic Greenhouse Gas Management Act 1989*. The gradual reduction is an obligation under the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer.  The National Television and Computer Recycling Scheme was established in 2011 to provide Australian households and small businesses with access to free industry-funded collection and recycling services for televisions and computers, including printers, computer parts and peripherals. The Product Stewardship (Televisions and Computers) Regulations 2011 provide the legislative framework for the scheme. |
| Australian targets for Montreal protocol  2020 HFC Import limits – 7.25 million tonnes CO2e  2020 HCFC import limits – 2.5 ODP tonnes  2020 Methyl bromide Import limits – 28.98 metric tonnes | 2021 HFC Import limits – 7.25 million tonnes CO2e  2021 HCFC import limits - 2.5 ODP tonnes  2021 Methyl bromide Import limits – 28.98 metric tonnes | 2022 HFC Import limits – 6.25 million tonnes CO2e  2022 HCFC import limits – 2.5 ODP tonnes  2022 Methyl bromide Import limits – to be decided | 2023 HFC Import limits – 6.25 million tonnes CO2e  2023 HCFC import limits – 2.5 ODP tonnes  2023 Methyl bromide Import limits – to be decided |
| The National Television Computer and Recycling Scheme's (NTCRS) annual target for recycling is met (68%) | NTCRS target  achieves a recycling rate of 70% | NTCRS target  achieves a recycling rate of 72% | NTCRS target  achieves a recycling rate of 74% |
| Unprocessed waste glass in a whole or broken state banned from waste export from 1 January 2021 | Mixed waste plastics that are not of a single resin/polymer type banned from export from 1 July 2021  Whole waste tyres banned from export from 1 December 2021 | Single resin/polymer waste plastics that have not been reprocessed banned from export from 1 July 2022 | Mixed and unsorted waste paper and cardboard will be banned from waste export from 1 July 2024.  All waste bans in effect by 1 July 2024 | Context: The Council of Australian Governments has agreed to the timetable and definitions to ban waste plastic, paper, glass and tyres. The COAG waste export ban is the first step in taking responsibility for our own waste and using this resource to create jobs, spark innovation, and deliver strong environmental outcomes. |
| Deliver department-led actions (17 actions) | Deliver department-led actions (4 actions) | Deliver department-led actions (2 actions) | Deliver any remaining department-led actions; assess performance against NWPAP Targets | Context: The department is the lead Australian Government agency for the implementation of the National Waste Policy and its associated Action Plan. Responsibility for delivering on the Action Plan's 7 targets and 80 actions is shared across Australian Government, state, territory and local governments, the industry and business sectors, and non-government organisations. |
| National Standard framework established in Commonwealth legislation | Scheduling of priority chemicals of concern, in accordance with implementation plan (to be established) | | | Context: Environment ministers from the Australian Government and all states and territories met in July 2015 and agreed to establish a National Standard for the environmental risk management of industrial chemicals. The National Standard will improve the regulation of industrial chemicals, enabling a more consistent, efficient and effective approach to environmental risk management of industrial chemicals across all jurisdictions. |
| National Pollutant Inventory data published by 31 March each year | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | Context: National Pollutant Inventory is a National Environment Protection Measure under the *National Environment Protection Council Act 1994* and fulfils Australia's international obligation under the 1996 OECD Recommendation of the Council on Implementing Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers. |

#### Biosecurity objective

**Manage biosecurity risks to Australian agriculture, the environment and our way of life**

| Performance criteria | 2020–21 measure | 2021–22 measure | 2022–23 measure | 2023–24 measure | Context |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| The national biosecurity system meets the agreed national goals and objectives of the Intergovernmental Agreement on Biosecurity | Performance measures are developed to assess the effectiveness of the national biosecurity system | Performance baseline established | Performance measures trend positively | Performance measures trend positively | **Context:** The Intergovernmental Agreement on biosecurity seeks to strengthen Australia's biosecurity system through enhanced national collaboration among Australian governments. Signatories agreed to the development of a set of national performance measures. The performance measures will continue to develop and evolve over time. |

| Performance criteria | 2020–21 measure | 2021–22 measure | 2022–23 measure | 2023–24 measure | Context |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Regulation, partnerships and service delivery manage biosecurity risk | Rates of compliance with regulations administered by the department are maintained or improved | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | **Context:** This is a composite measure, using indicators for a range of areas where the department is responsible for regulatory compliance.  This is a composite measure reporting our performance against service level standards.  The department's service standards have been developed to ensure we are delivering our regulatory activities within agreed timeframes. The standards describe how individuals and businesses can expect requests for information or regulatory activities to be progressed by the department. These include:  requests for general information  import regulatory activities, including inspections, treatments of cargo, and the assessment of applications  export regulatory activities, including inspections and assessment of applications  live animal export regulatory activities, including inspections, assessment of applications, registrations and audits.  The service standards outline obligations of individuals and businesses to help us provide information and regulatory activities in a timely way. Performance results may be affected by the ability of individuals and businesses to provide necessary information or meet other requirements. |
| Agreed regulatory performance timeframes are met | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 |

#### Water Resources objective

**Support the sustainable management and productive use of Australia's water resources**

| Performance criteria | 2020–21 measure | 2021–22 measure | 2022–23 measure | 2023–24 measure | Context |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Support sustainable use and maintenance of high-quality water resources | Number of water resource plans (WRPs) accredited under Commonwealth law  33 of 33 WRPs accredited  (or 100%) | Accreditation complete address amendments as they arise | Accreditation complete address amendments as they arise | Accreditation complete address amendments as they arise | **Context:** The Murray–Darling Basin Plan sets out a requirement for Basin state and territory governments to develop WRPs. These plans are assessed by the MDBA and accredited by the Australian Government minister responsible for water. The WRPs give legal effect to sustainable diversion limits and strengthens protections for environmental water, protecting the Australian Government's investment in environmental water recovery. These instruments may be amended with new information or associated legislative changes. |
| Maintaining Basin jurisdiction cooperation and coordination to implement the Basin Plan | Participation at all scheduled Basin Officials Committee and Ministerial Council meetings | | | **Context:** The Ministerial Council and Basin Officials Committee are responsible under the *Water Act 2007* for overseeing implementation of the Basin Plan. They also oversee the operation of water management and delivery in the southern Basin under the Murray–Darling Basin Agreement. Strategic plans and key actions arising from meetings drive the work program, consistent with the legislative framework and timelines. |
| Track engagement with key stakeholders (industry, environment, local government) | Number of meetings held across sectors | | | **Context:** Ensuring policy development and program/project delivery are informed by the views of stakeholders across Australia is essential for water resource management. |
| Improved progress towards delivering the Murray–Darling Basin Plan (Bridging the Gap, Water Efficiency Program, Supply and constraint measures): | | | | **Context:** Bridging the Gap water recoveries – approximately 47 GL of further water recovery is required to meet the gap bridging target.  The Water Efficiency Program will deliver funding to upgrade water infrastructure in the Murray–Darling Basin. Around $1.4 billion remains available in the Water for the Environment Special Account to improve water efficiency and deliver 450 GL of water for the environment by 2024.  Supply measures provide greater flexibility in meeting sustainable diversion limits by allowing equivalent environmental outcomes of the Basin Plan to be achieved through more efficient use of environmental water. Basin States are required to deliver 36 projects with an environmentally equivalent value of 605 GL. The Australian Government is the responsible funding partner through NPAs. |
| 47 GL recovery remaining to bridge the gap | 20 GL | A further 27 GL recovered | Complete |
| Number of large water efficiency measure projects (>$2million) contracted | 20 projects | under 20 projects | 10 projects |
| WESA funding contracted | $700 million | $420 million | $280 million |
| Establishment of NPA and associated milestones for Phase 2 implementation of supply and constraint measures – 17 of 36 supply measures implemented | 19 of 36 supply measures implemented | 21 of 36 supply measures implemented | 36 of 36 supply measures implemented |
| Undertake statutory review of WELS scheme and track implementation of review recommendations | Implement recommendations from the review | N/A | N/A | **Context:** The Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards (WELS) scheme provides information for purchasers of water-use and water-saving products: dishwashers, clothes washing machines, taps, showers, lavatories, urinals and flow controllers. To be legally supplied, these products must meet the performance and testing requirements of the WELS standard (AS/NZS 6400:2016 Water Efficient Products – Rating and Labelling) and must be registered and labelled correctly. The Australian Government administers the scheme on behalf of all state and territory governments. |
| Release Ministerial Forum response to the Lake Eyre Basin Intergovernmental Agreement review. | Implement recommendations from the Agreement review | N/A | N/A | **Context:** The Lake Eyre Basin Intergovernmental Agreement (Agreement) was established between the Commonwealth, Queensland, South Australia and Northern Territory to enable jurisdictions to coordinate the management of cross-border Lake Eyre Basin water and related natural resource matters. |
| The Agreement requires that the Ministerial Forum undertake a review of the IGA after the fifth anniversary of the effective date of the Agreement, and thereafter on a 10-yearly basis to assess the extent to which the objectives of the Agreement have been achieved. | | | | **Context:** The Productivity Commission's report on national water reform released by the Australian Government in 2018 found further work to do to complete unfinished business from the NWI. Governments have agreed to take a modular approach to a renewal of the NWI by focusing on the highest priority areas of water for cities and towns, water for Indigenous Australians and climate change. |
| Progress high priority areas of water for cities and towns, water for Indigenous Australians and climate change with jurisdictions | Renewal of the National Water Initiative (NWI) in relation to the high priority areas | All Australian jurisdictions execute new NWI | N/A |
| Establishment of the Great Artesian Basin Stakeholder Advisory Committee and track participation and number of meetings | Participation at all scheduled meetings | | | **Context:** The signing of the Heads of Agreement for the Great Artesian Basin Strategic Management Plan in July 2020 concludes the work of the Great Artesian Basin Coordinating Committee and provides the authority for the establishment of the replacement Great Artesian Basin Stakeholder Advisory Committee.  The new committee is a skills-based advisory body and will support the delivery of the updated Plan and provide Basin ministers with advice on whole of Basin matters. The committee will consist of a maximum of 14 members (including a Chair). The appointment of both the chair and members of the committee will require agreement by Basin ministers. |

| Performance criteria | 2020–21 measure | 2021–22 measure | 2022–23 measure | 2023–24 measure | Context |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Water quality and flows, and ecosystem health are maintained or improved | The restoration of the hydrological regime which includes relevant flow components set out in the Basin Plan (section 8.51(1)(b)) | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | **Context:** The target is to assess whether the Australian Government's management of environmental water achieves expected water flow and connectivity outcomes that underpin ecosystem functions of water-dependent systems. |
| Hydrological connectivity between the river and floodplain and between hydrologically connected valleys | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 |
| Murray–Darling Basin salt export: volume of flow and salt load (tonnes) over the Lower Lakes barrages | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 |
| Ramsar Information Sheet updates completed for 8 additional Ramsar sites | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | **Context:** This target will demonstrate that sound information is available to inform decisions relating to Ramsar site management (including management of threats, decisions on developments referred under the EPBC Act, and management of environmental watering), helping to maintain and enhance the ecological character of Ramsar sites. |

#### Antarctic objective

**Advance Australia's strategic, scientific and environmental interests in the Antarctic and the Southern Ocean**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Performance criteria | 2020–21 measure | 2021–22 measure | 2022–23 measure | 2023–24 measure | Context |
| Strengthen Australia's leadership in Antarctica and the Southern Ocean, by conducting world-leading science, promoting environmental best practice, and developing economic, educational and collaborative opportunities | Measure progress against 20 Year Action Plan | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | **Context:** This target measures performance against the public commitments set out in the Australian Antarctic Strategy and 20 Year Action Plan, which seek to protect Australia's national Antarctic interests. The Australian Antarctic Division leads Australia's science program in Antarctica including world leading research to investigate the role of Antarctica and the Southern Ocean in the global climate system.  This target demonstrates international collaboration and research leadership in the Australian Antarctic Program, underpinning Australia's role in the Antarctic Treaty System. |
| Number of institutions collaborating in the Australian Antarctic Program (target: average of at least 100 over previous 5 years) | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 |
| Number of scientific publications published in peer-reviewed journals (target: average of at least 100 over previous 5 years) | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 | As per 2020–21 |