Ref: 13WRM0798

Senator the Hon. Simon Birmingham
Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for the Environment
Parliament House
PO Box 6100
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Senator Birmingham

I refer to the South Australian Government's obligations under the (Implementation Plan for Augmentation of the Adelaide Desalination Plant)

I am pleased to provide the attached report on the manner in which the state has met its obligations in 2012-13, which has been provided separately to officers from your department, and which is required to be provided by November 30 each year.

Please note that the report also includes, as an attachment, a copy of written confirmation from the Murray Darling Basin Authority that all water provided to the environment in 2012-13 has been accounted for in the agreed manner and where relevant would be available to contribute towards 'bridging the gap\* (in respect of sustainable diversion limits under the Basin Plan).

If your officers have any questions on the specific contents of the report, these can be directed to \*Name redacted\* Director, Water and Climate Change in my department on \*Phone redacted\*

Yours sincerely,

IAN HUNTER MC

Minister for Water and the River Murray

29/11/2013

**ADELAIDE DESALINATION PLANT**

**Report on Environmental Water Allocations, Use and Outcomes (for the year ended 30 June 2013)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Licence** | **Account** | **Nominal value****(GL)** | **Carryover of balance****(GL)** | **Allocation** | **Environmental Use (GL)** | **Closing Balance****(GL)** |
| **%** | **GL** | **Planned** | **Actual** |
| **High Reliability Water Entitlement** | SA213146Class 3a | SA213146-0-10009 | 2 | - | 100 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| **Environmental Provision** |  | SA213146-0-10009[[1]](#footnote-1) | 12 | - | 100 | 12 | 12 | 12 | 0 |

**Watering Locations:**

1, Lower Lakes. Coorong and Murray Mouth

**Periods of Watering:**

1 Dec 2012 - 30 Jan 2013 (12 GL)

**Site Watering Objectives including Expected Ecological Outcomes:**

Provide water to keep Lake Alexandrina salinity less that 1,000 EC for the whole year

Provide water for fishways to enable continuous releases for connectivity between the lakes and Coorong

**Observed Ecological Outcomes:**

Lake Alexandrina salinity remained below 1,000 EC for the whole year

There were continuous barrage and fishway releases for the whole year

286,000 waterbirds were observed at the lakes and Coorong

There was an increase in fish diversity in the South Lagoon of the Coorong

Black bream recruitment occurred for the first time since the drought in the North Lagoon of the Coorong

**SA Comments:**

The Coorong is recovering slowly from the drought. Ruppia tuberosa, an important plant species in the Coorong, has not yet recovered and environmental needs to be provided earlier in spring and maintained for the whole lifecycle of the plant.

**Watering Locations:**

2. Channel including Berri Evaporation Basin. (Dishers Creek and Bookmark Creek

**Periods of Watering:**

1 July 2012 - 30 Jan 2013 (2 GL.)

**Site Watering Objectives including Expected Ecological Outcomes•.**

Provide dilution volumes to manage salinity and dissolved oxygen levels for the threatened species Murray hardyhead fish in Berri Evaporation Basin and Dishers Creek

Provide flow through Bookmark Creek for fringing vegetation

**Observed Ecological Outcomes:**

The salinity and dissolved oxygen levels have been maintained within the limits suitable for Murray hardyhead at Berri Evaporation Basin and Dishers Creek. From mid 2012 onwards Murray hardyhead were caught within Berri Evaporation Basin for the first time since spring 2010. Seven fish in total were captured, some of which were juvenile fish. 93 Murray hardyhead were captured in July 2012 and 821 Murray hardyhead were captured In November 2012.

**SA Comments:**

The Berri Evaporation Basin Murray hardyhead population is considered to be the most stable/healthy population of Murray hardyhead within the Murray-Darling

Basin, due to the consistent high numbers of fish captured of varying size class distribution. It is essential to support this site during periods of low flow/high evaporation.

1. This water has been sourced from allocations associated with SA River Murray class 3a. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)