Murray–Darling Basin community perceptions research 2023

Knowledge of the Murray–Darling Basin and Water Management

**Foundational Basin knowledge**

A key factor to understanding water management is having knowledge of the Basin. In line with the 2022 findings, **knowledge of the Basin tended to be largely superficial**, with substantial gaps in understanding identified among respondents. Most Basin community members continued to be unaware that they lived in the Basin (73% not aware).

### Heard of the Murray-Darling Basin?

60% of community members and 91% of water licence holders in 2023 said that they have heard of the Murray–Darling Basin and know what it is, compared to 61% of community members and 89% of water licence holders in 2022.

35% of community members and 9% of water licence holders in 2023 said that they have heard of the Murray–Darling Basin, but not the details, compared to 34% of community members and 11% of water licence holders in 2022.

5% of community members and 1% of water licence holders in 2023 said that they have not heard of the Murray–Darling Basin, compared to 5% of community members and less than 1% of water licence holders in 2022.

73% of community members and 27% of water licence holders who lived in postcodes within the Basin **did not know** that they were living in the Basin. 2022 figures show that 77% of community members and 23% of water licence holders did not know they lived in the Basin.

Questions and data used for the charts above:

* Q14. Have you heard of the Murray–Darling Basin? The community base size in 2023 was n=800, and in 2022 it was n=817. The water licence holder base size in 2023 was n=214, and in 2022 it was n=200.
* Q15. Do you live in the Murray-Darling Basin? The community base size in 2023 was n=763, and in 2022 it was n=780. The water licence holder base size in 2023 was n=212, and in 2022 it was n=199.

A participant quote stating: I understand the idea, but if someone asked me to show it on a map, I wouldn’t be able to. This quote is attributed to a less engaged community member from Queensland.

Consistent with the findings from 2022, the qualitative research identified substantial gaps in understanding, even among more engaged participants (including water licence holders).

Many participants had **limited awareness** in relation to the following:

* The size, scale and locational coverage of the Basin.
* The extent of management of Basin waterways, and details about management operations and processes.
* How the Basin operated as a system, including that underground water was part of the Basin system.
* How water flows, including environmental flows, were managed and overseen, and by whom.
* The extent of monitoring and oversight in relation to water take, including allocations and entitlements, as well as compliance and enforcement activities.