



# MEDIA RELEASE

**Senator the Hon Penny Wong**

*Minister for Climate Change and Water*

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## **ADDITIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL WATER FOR MURRAY-DARLING BASIN**

Additional water from the purchase of Toorale Station has been made available for environmental watering at sites in the Murray-Darling Basin, Minister for Climate Change and Water, Senator Penny Wong, said today.

Senator Wong announced on 6 May that five sites in the MDB would share in seven billion litres of water purchased by the Australian Government, most of it sourced from allocations against entitlements held by Toorale Station on the junction of the Darling and Warrego rivers.

Today's announcement provides further water from the Toorale purchase for one of these sites as well as another site.

"The New South Wales Government's audit of river flow data has identified an additional 1,236 million litres of water available for release to benefit stressed rivers and wetlands in the Basin," Senator Wong said.

"The additional water will be released at two sites in South Australia: Overland Corner Floodplain, near Kingston-on-Murray, and Markaranka Floodplain, near Waikerie.

"This brings to 9.4 billion litres the total of water released to the environment so far as a result of the water buyback being conducted through the Australian Government's plan *Water for the Future*."

The New South Wales Government purchased Toorale station in northern New South Wales in late 2008 with funding assistance from the Australian Government.

Overland Corner Floodplain consists of large areas of River Red Gum and is a habitat known to support the nationally threatened Regent Parrot; the Great Egret which is listed under the bilateral agreement with China on the protection of migratory birds; and the nationally threatened Southern Bell Frog.

Watering is expected to help prevent permanent environmental damage including significant loss of mature River Red Gums and other flood-dependent vegetation and to provide a critical drought refuge for aquatic species.

The Overland Corner Floodplain will receive 500 million litres.

An additional 736 million litres for Markaranka Floodplain brings the total allocation (in addition to earlier watering) for Markaranka to 2,236 million litres. The additional water will contribute to providing drought refuge for a variety of animals including rare duck species, and to avoiding the irretrievable loss of mature River Red Gum communities.

More information about the sites receiving water and the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder is available at: [www.environment.gov.au/water/environmental/cewh](http://www.environment.gov.au/water/environmental/cewh)