



Australian Government
Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder



Flow-MER PROGRAM – AREA-SCALE PROGRESS REPORT

Background

The Quarterly Progress report is a standard project management requirement and aims to provide an update on:

- how the project is tracking overall
- progress to date on (key activities)
- issues, risks associated with the key activities
- key activities undertaken and upcoming
- input to adaptive management

The Quarterly Progress report relates to activities carried out over the financial year as outlined in the Annual Implementation Plan (AIP).

Requirements

1. Milestone deliverables

As outlined in the contract, a Project Progress Report is required quarterly each financial year:

- a. Quarter 1: 30 September
- b. Quarter 2: 30 December
- c. Quarter 3: 30 March
- d. Quarter 4: 30 June

2. Statement of work and Performance Criteria

Area-scale Service Providers should refer to the Statement of Work, Milestones, Meetings, Reporting and Deliverables and the Performance criteria as set out in the Area-scale Contract - Schedule 5, Schedule 6 and Schedule 12 respectively.

The following Performance Indicators provide a guide to the Service Provider in the delivery of the Quarterly Progress Report:

Service Delivery: meets deliverables on time as detailed in Schedule 6, for approval by Commonwealth.

Collaboration: effectively collaborate with stakeholders to deliver the Flow-MER program as per Schedule 3 Governance and Collaboration Principles. This includes attending and contributing to all required meetings and workshops detailed in Schedule 6.

Outcomes: meets outcomes and objectives under the Approved MER Plan and Annual Implementation Plan.







Guidance




Template is provided at [Attachment A](#)

Attachment A

Flow-MER Quarterly Progress Report		
Murrumbidgee		
Project Leader:	Skye Wassens	Phone: 0404 495 578
Report period:	1 April – 30 June 2025	

Project Health Summary

Indicator	Status/Traffic light	Comment
Overall Rating		<p><i>Status: Is the project on track to deliver requirements as outlined in the MER Plan and AIP for this financial year?</i></p> <p><i>Status – on track</i></p>
Time (schedule)		<p><i>Status: Is this project (and activities) forecast date of completion tracking to the AIP schedule?</i></p> <p><i>Status – on track</i></p>
Engagement		<p><i>Status/Traffic light question: What is the current status of the relationship with project and other stakeholders</i></p> <p><i>Status – on track</i></p>
Safety		<p><i>Status/Traffic light question: Has there been a safety incident, or have any inadequacies been identified in the safety planning (note, details on any incidents or inadequacies must be communicated to the CEWH as soon as practical)</i></p> <p><i>Status – no incidents</i></p>
Risks		<p><i>Status/Traffic light question: Have any future or potential risks been identified that may impact our ability to achieve committed outcomes?</i></p> <p><i>If yes, fill out further details in table ‘Overarching project risks, Opportunities & Issues’(pg. 6).</i></p> <p><i>Status – two risks identified (refer to table ‘Overarching project risks, Opportunities & Issues’)</i></p>
Issues		<p><i>Status/Traffic light question: Are there any current issues that may impact our ability to achieve committed outcomes?</i></p>

		Status -no issues likely to impact the outcomes at this stage.
	On track - Tasks are completed or on track and there are no issues	
	Delayed - Tasks are delayed or under pressure, but not influencing the outputs of the project	
	Not on track - Tasks are delayed and are influencing the projects ability to meet its commitments	

Summary of Progress on Activities for this Quarter

Monitoring

Themes: River Flows & Connectivity, Native Vegetation, Waterbirds, Native Fish and Cultural Outcomes

Theme	Contributing to Basin/Area/Both	What has been delivered in this Quarter? Any risks/comments?
Native Fish & turtles	Both	<p>Sites in AIP were adjusted slightly as some sites in the Lower Murrumbidgee were dry: Surveys carried out in early April included:</p> <p>Yanco-Billabong Creek system - 7 sites (instead of 6 sites in AIP).</p> <p>Lower Murrumbidgee persistent creek/channel and lake systems - 6 sites (instead of 8 sites in AIP)</p> <p>Lower Murrumbidgee River DS of Hay to Boundary Bend -7 sites (instead of 6 sites in AIP)</p>
Hydrology	Both	As per AIP: Depth logger download at 41 sites began 9 June, however trip delayed by technical difficulties and rain. Trip rescheduled to week starting 21 st July.

First Nations activities

Description of activity	What has been delivered in this Quarter? Any risks/comments?
First Nations Knowledge sharing meeting	Completed as per AIP re. working with the Cultural Advisor to provide networking opportunities for First Nations people: Fleur Stelling (CSU) convened meeting on 7 April to discuss collaborating in relation to knowledge exchange and capacity building across Murray and Murrumbidgee areas. The meeting was attended by Nioka Dupond (MLI), Richard McTernan and Aunty Valda Murray (both Duduroa Dhargal Aboriginal Corporation), Robyn Watts (CSU), and Erin Lenon (CEWH), Fleur Stelling (CSU). Fleur convened meeting on 2 June,

	continuing to develop our approach to knowledge sharing. Attended by: Nioka Dupond, Richard McTernan, Robyn Watts, Michele Groat (CEWH), Aunty Patsy Winch (Mutthi Mutthi).
Liaison with Cultural Advisor	As per AIP to provide the cultural advisor with opportunities to have input into all aspects of the Flow-MER program: Fleur Stelling and Nioka Dupond met 8 April, 22 April, 6 May, 27 May to discuss: acknowledgement protocols, use of Wiradjuri language, planning First Nations activities for 2025, Cultural Advisor role, and Cultural evaluation. Skye Wassens, Nioka Dupond and Fleur Stelling met 25 June to discuss Cultural Advisor role further.
Mutthi Mutthi event planning meeting	Fleur Stelling (as per AIP to support Community Led Initiative (CLI)) convened collaborative meeting on 9 April, 7 May and 4 June to plan Mutthi Mutthi event in Oct 2025, attended by Nioka Dupond (MLI), Michele Groat (CEWH), Erin Lenon (CEWH), Fleur Stelling (CSU), Aunty Patsy Winch (Mutthi Mutthi), Kaleanna Reyland (DCCEEWSW).
Fivebough Bioblitz event planning meeting	Fleur Stelling (as per AIP to support Community Led Initiative (CLI)) convened collaborative meetings on 28 April, 26 May and 23 June to plan Bioblitz event in Oct 2025 at Fivebough wetland. Meetings attended by Nioka Dupond (MLI), Michele Groat (CEWH), Erin Lenon (CEWH), Fleur Stelling (CSU), Sarah Talbot (CSU), Jessie McPherson (MLI).
Creative output	Completed by 30 June as per AIP: Fleur Stelling completed work with Wiradjuri artist Ashleigh Pengelly to produce threatened species poster. Poster printed and distribution commenced 24 June. Fleur also liaised with Andy Lowes & Pat Gudhka to link poster to Flow-MER website – published 23 June.
Engagement – Murrumbidgee Regional Aboriginal Water Committee (MRAWC)	As per AIP to continue engagement and discussion with Murrumbidgee Regional Aboriginal Water Committee: Fleur Stelling presented a Flow-MER update to the MRAWC online at their Mildura meeting 13 May.
Mutthi Mutthi participation in fish survey field trip	As per AIP relating to First Nations involvement in field trips, CSU's casual field staff Jedda Kelly and Maxine Kelly from the Mutthi Mutthi attended a fish survey field trip to Lower Bidgee floodplain lakes with CSU's Gordon O'Brien, and DCCEEWSW Dale Campbell, 31 March to 6 April. It was a worthwhile trip with positive feedback about being out on Country and learning about fish monitoring. CSU has engaged Mutthi Mutthi members as casual employees to take part in monitoring.
Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual property (ICIP) and Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) plans and processes. Engagement with CSU Human	The Steering Committee have advised that we wait for further advice from the Basin scale so that a consistent approach be taken across the MDB.

Research Ethics unit to ensure compliance and best practice processes.	<p>Note that as per AIP, the team has previously engaged with CSU Human Research Ethics unit to ensure compliance and best practice processes.</p> <p>Skye Wassens attended Gayini Data Hub user needs workshop 1 April</p>
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Knowledge Exchange, Communications and Engagement

Description of activity	What has been delivered in this Quarter? Any Risks/comments
Update webpage to Flow-MER 2.0	Completed as per AIP: Fleur Stelling worked with providers to update Murrumbidgee Flow-MER webpage to current Flow-MER 2.0
Publishing – Flow-MER website	Completed as per AIP (2 articles published to Flow-MER website per year): article sent to CEWH on 18 June for review. Final approval received 30 June. Sent to ARRC on 30 June to publish to Flow-Mer website (with permission from NNTC).
Social media activity	Completed as per AIP (3 posts per quarter/12 per year): social media accounts active (Instagram and X). No posts in April due to Caretaking role period of government in lead-up to election. Posts made about fish surveys 20 May; these beautiful wetlands 17 June; Hot off the press! 30 June
Publishing – local media	Exceeding AIP (2 articles published per year) – a third article titled <i>Lower Bidgee lakes: looking back and looking forward</i> sent to editor of The Riverine Grazier for publishing on 10 June.
Email updates	<p>As per AIP regarding provision of email updates for every field trip:</p> <p>Lignum monitoring using drones update 3 April.</p> <p>Fish survey update 14 April</p>
Digital story	Completed by 30 June as per AIP to produce one pilot digital story: Fleur Stelling met with Nella Smith at Narrandera on 10 April to begin and on 21 May to complete a pilot digital story. Final editing approved by CEWH 26 June and finalised for publishing on Flow-MER website 26 June. Published 30 June.
Creative output and mapping key habitats	Completed by 30 June as per AIP: Fleur finalised correspondence on 4 June with Andy Lowes and Pat Gudhka to organise linking the creative output (threatened species poster) to the Flow-MER website to house the mapped key habitats, including additional information on the species habitats to accompany the maps for the website. Finalised for publishing on Flow-MER website 24 June.

Research

Description of activity	What has been delivered in this Quarter? Any Risks/comments
Multi-modal Capture project	Progress according to AIP project timeline met, including June milestone: Mitchell Whitelaw continued to process and produce footage from November 2024. Update on progress provided to CEWH 12 May. Presentation of outline and Stakeholder meeting on 25 June to provide input into bringing project to fruition.

Responsive monitoring

Work order name and number (1, 2, 3)	Committed to deliver (as per work order) this Quarter	What has been delivered this Quarter
N/A		

Reporting

Reports as per contract:

Quarterly Progress Report (QPR)

Quarterly Snapshot (QS)

Draft Annual Area-scale MER Report (DMER)

Final Annual Area-scale MER Report (FMER)

Data upload (DATA)

Report	Milestone due	Deliverables/comments
Quarterly Progress Report (QPR)	30 June 2025	Completed as per AIP (1 QPR/quarter): Submitted to CEWH 30 June.
Quarterly Snapshot (QS)	30 June 2025	Completed as per AIP (1 QS/quarter): submitted to CEWH 23 June, edits received 30 June and resubmitted final version 30 June.

Meeting requirements

Meetings attended as per Area-scale contract:

Area-scale Project Team (ASPT)

Thematic Working Groups (TWG) (River Flows & Connectivity, Native Vegetation, Waterbirds, Native Fish and Cultural Outcomes)

Knowledge Exchange Working Group (KEWG)

Cultural Network (CN) (Contractually known as Cultural Knowledge Network Working Group (CKNWG))

Data Management Working Group (DMWG)

Flow-MER Steering Committee Meetings (FM-SCM)

Annual Flow-MER Forum (AFMF)

Meeting attended /or held	Date	Personnel in attendance
<i>NOTE that as per AIP all meetings scheduled have been attended</i>		
Knowledge Exchange Working Group (KEWG)	12/05/25	Fleur Stelling
Area-scale Project Team (ASPT)	Fortnightly meetings	Fortnightly meetings since July 2024
Thematic Working Groups (TWG) (River Flows & Connectivity, Native Vegetation, Waterbirds, Native Fish and Cultural Outcomes)	WB 15/05/25 NF 30/06/25 NV 3/06/25 RFC - Not scheduled this quarter CO 12/06/25	Waterbirds (WB) Skye Wassens Native Fish (NF) Gordon O'Brien Native Vegetation (NV) Skye Wassens River Flows & Connectivity (RFC) Andrew Hall Cultural Outcomes (CO) Skye Wassens
Cultural Network (CN) (Contractually known as Cultural Knowledge Network Working Group (CKNWG))	30/04/25 to 01/05/25	Fleur Stelling attended in person at Mildura
Data Management Working Group (DMWG)	No meeting scheduled for this quarter	Andrew Hall
Flow-MER Steering Committee Meetings (FM-SCM)	8/04/2025	Skye Wassens

EWAG	19/06/2025	Skye Wassens
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Adaptive management

An opportunity to provide an update on new knowledge or insights during this Quarter to assist in adaptive management of the delivery of environmental water.

This may include outcomes and advice from external meetings, such as EWAGs.

Observations/outcomes

Recommendations from waterbird planning meeting on 18 March:

- Create shallow habitat mosaics for painted snipe in Western Lakes and possibly Gayini.

Also:

- Identified Golden perch YOY and hence need to plan water delivery for 2025-26 to facilitate movement between river and floodplain
- Identified Olive perchlet in Yanco Creek – meeting in July to plan water management approach.

Overarching project Risks, Opportunities & Issues

Risk / issue	Action
New legislation on batteries with the potential to impact use of electrofishing boat	Investigate implications
Bird flu	Follow DCCEEW guidelines for field surveys

Upcoming activities for next Quarter: July, August, September

Activities to be undertaken in the upcoming period

- Depth logger download trip starting 21 July
- Meeting with Leeton and District Local Aboriginal Land Council: 21 July
- Waterbird surveys: August/September
- Annual Forum 2-4 September
- Fish tagging trip: September (TBC)

Outstanding Information

Information required (item)	From Whom	Date required	Urgency (High/Medium/Low)
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