



ACT
Government

Environment and Planning

ACT Water Strategy 2014–44

Implementation Plan 1 (2014–18)



AUGUST 2014





Introduction

The Minister for the Environment, Mr Simon Corbell MLA, released the ACT Water Strategy 2014–44: Striking the Balance in 2014.

The vision for the ACT Water Strategy

A community working together managing water wisely to support a vibrant, sustainable and thriving region.

The ACT Water Strategy is guided by the vision and the following three outcomes and seven strategies:

Outcome 1: Healthy catchments and waterbodies

Strategy 1: Achieve integrated catchment management across the ACT and region

Strategy 2: Protect and restore aquatic ecosystems in urban and non-urban areas

Strategy 3: Manage stormwater and flooding

Outcome 2: A sustainable water supply used efficiently

Strategy 4: Secure long term water supplies

Strategy 5: Manage and promote water services efficiently and sustainably

Outcome 3: A community that values and enjoys clean, healthy catchments and waterways

Strategy 6: Provide clean and safe water for the ACT

Strategy 7: Engage the community on understanding and contributing to a more sustainable city

The ACT Water Strategy includes 18 specific actions to achieve these strategies. Progress against these actions will be measured by the targets identified in the strategy document, including interim targets for each five year implementation period.





How will the ACT Water Strategy be implemented?

The five year implementation plans will be guided by the ACT Water Strategy. This first implementation plan has been developed by the ACT Government and provides a road map of the most significant milestones required to deliver the actions of the ACT Water Strategy during the period 2014–2018.

Implementation of actions will be dependent upon the availability of funding. Relevant ACT Government directorates will focus efforts to secure resources for actions that demonstrate cost effectiveness in terms of responding to water management priorities and achieving the greatest positive impacts. Activities that are currently unfunded remain future options for further consideration by the ACT Government and other interested partners. If funding is not available, this may require activities to be re-scoped, and undertaken within existing resources where possible.

In this plan, milestones (sub-actions) are outlined for each of the 18 actions identified in the ACT Water Strategy; responsibilities are allocated to lead ACT agencies for achievement of individual actions; and timeframes are set to enable progress of the actions to be monitored and assessed.

Implementation of the ACT Water Strategy is a key responsibility of the ACT Government. A number of agencies have roles and identified responsibilities in implementing the Strategy. Through collaboration with the community, these include businesses and research organisations as well as the Australian Government and other state and territory governments. See Appendix 1 for a list of government agencies.



The second implementation plan will be developed by the end of 2018 following a review of the first plan by the ACT Government. This review will take into consideration the 2015 State of the Environment (SoE) Report by the Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment, stakeholder views, and availability of funding. Public and expert input and review will also be taken into consideration for the development of the second implementation plan.

How will Implementation Plan 1 be assessed and reported?

Milestones set in the implementation plan will form the basis for assessing annual progress. Progress in implementing the ACT Water Strategy will be reported in each Environment and Planning Directorate (EPD) Annual Report.

The ACT Water Strategy is guided by a monitoring and review protocol, including milestones and indicators. Roles and responsibilities for collecting data for the indicators have been assigned through the implementation plan. Reporting will occur through EPD annual reports, focusing on progress against achievement of actions.



Outcome 1: Healthy catchments and waterbodies

Strategy 1: Achieve integrated catchment management across the ACT and region

Actions	Milestones and timeframes	Lead
Action 1 Strengthen coordination and collaboration for catchment management across the ACT and region.	1.1 Establish new catchment management arrangements (2014) and mechanisms for stronger cross-border collaboration (ongoing): ¹ <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. establish a new catchment management coordination group involving representation from ACT Government directorates, NCA, ACTEW Water, NSW Government and community. a. further clarify roles and responsibilities for integrated catchment management in the ACT and region. 	EPD/Water CMTEDD, TAMS, HD and JACS/ ESA, ACTEW
Action 2 Enhance knowledge and spatial planning for water and catchment management.	2.1 Develop an integrated catchment management (ICM) plan for the ACT and surrounding upstream catchments to guide land and water management for protection of water quality and water supply: ² <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. develop sub-catchment plans for the catchments feeding our major urban lakes, consistent with the overarching ICM plan. 	EPD/Water
	2.2 Fill critical gaps in catchment knowledge and better integrate land, water and biodiversity data including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. further development of tools such as the Waterwatch Catchment Health Indicator Program (CHIP).² 	EPD/Water
	2.3 Develop the water component of an ACT spatial planning framework for natural resource management to inform management of land, water and biodiversity ¹ <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. drawing on soil and vegetation mapping and Hydrogeological Landscape Framework, and the NARClm (NSW/ACT Regional Climate Modelling) project. 	EPD/NCP
	2.4 Undertake management planning with clear water management objectives (water quality and recreational use): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. finalise Jerrabomberra Wetlands Master Plan (2014)¹ b. finalise Googong Foreshores Plan of Management (2014) c. commence review of Canberra Urban Lakes and Ponds Plan of Management (2015)² d. complete Lower Molonglo River Corridor Statutory Plan of Management (2015)¹ e. commence preparation of a Lower Cotter Catchment Plan of Management (2014)² f. commence review of Murrumbidgee River Corridor Plan of Management (2016)² g. update ACT Aquatic Species and Riparian Zone Conservation Strategy (2016-19)¹ h. complete the ACT Sphagnum Bogs and Fens Management Plan (2015)¹ 	EPD/TAMS

Actions	Milestones and timeframes	Lead
<p>Action 3</p> <p>Integrate water cycle management and green infrastructure into the planning and design of urban environments.</p>	<p>3.1 Progress integration of water cycle management and green infrastructure into Canberra’s urban design by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. finalising the review of the Waterways: Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) Code and related documents in the Territory Plan¹ b. reviewing design standards for WSUD infrastructure² c. incorporating into planning, approaches that enhance the ability of vegetation and water bodies to ameliorate the impact of climate change in urban areas.¹ 	<p>EPD/Water TAMS</p> <p>EPD/ Climate Change</p>
<p>Action 4</p> <p>Improve water monitoring and analysis across the ACT and region.</p>	<p>4.1 Develop an integrated and coordinated water monitoring program¹, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. development a water quality monitoring, management framework b. review of data collection points and methods, including monitoring of existing infrastructure for performance e.g. ponds and wetlands c. identification of priority gaps in monitoring and undertaking additional monitoring d. identifying new hydrologic and water quality technology e. consideration of the merits of Waterwatch and AUSRIVAS data being incorporated as part of the broader monitoring program f. contribution of monitoring data to refinement of infrastructure design and maintenance g. centralising data housing and developing an educational website for water related information (including live monitoring) h. improving access to water monitoring data to key stakeholders. 	<p>EPD/Water</p>

1. Funded through existing resources
2. Funding options to be investigated (currently unfunded)





Strategy 2: Protect and restore aquatic ecosystems in urban and non-urban areas

Actions	Milestones and timeframes	Lead
Action 5 Improve water quality and ecosystem health in the ACT and region's rivers, lakes, aquifers, ponds and wetlands.	5.1 Undertake restoration activities, including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> key actions from the Upper Murrumbidgee Demonstration Reach Implementation Plan² the One Million Trees program in the Murrumbidgee River Corridor (2018)¹ fish stocking¹ to improve diversity and fitness of species key actions from the Actions for Clean Water (ACWA) Plan² pending outcomes from phase one of the Basin Priority Project, deliver infrastructure to improve water quality in the six priority catchments by June 2019.¹ 	EPD, ACTEW, TAMS
	5.2 Undertake research and trials for improving water quality and ecosystems, including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> trial in-lake interventions such as macrophyte beds¹⁻² and removal of <i>Gambusia</i> (mosquito fish) in wetlands² review effectiveness of structures including changes to the river geomorphic profile caused by Tharwa Fish Habitat structures¹ carp control projects develop monitoring guidelines to measure performance of infrastructure. 	EPD, NCA, ACTEW, TAMS
Action 6 Ensure appropriate management (volume, timing, and quality) of environmental flows.	6.1 Explore opportunities for improved management of environmental flows, including in-stream and riparian health. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> review environmental flow guidelines in 2017-18. 	EPD/Water, EP&WR, ACTEW
Action 7 Strengthen compliance and enforcement for water resource management.	7.1 Enhance regulatory functions in relation to risk assessment, enforcement, stakeholder engagement and monitoring ¹ (ongoing) by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> implementing ACT water offence provisions consistent with National Framework for Compliance and Enforcement Systems for Water Resource Management (2016) reviewing existing water-related standards and where appropriate, develop new local standards that align with national standards updating environment protection guidelines for construction and land development in the ACT (2014) updating environment protection guidelines for rural lease holders including water quality protection requirements in Land Management Agreements. 	EPD/ EP&WR TAMS
	7.2 Complete a review of the <i>Environment Protection Act 1997</i> to strengthen enforcement provisions within the Act and to enable consideration of both actual and potential environmental harm (2014).	EPD/ EP&WR



Strategy 3: Manage stormwater and flooding

Actions	Milestones and timeframes	Lead
Action 8 Manage stormwater infrastructure sustainably.	8.1 Develop management and funding models for stormwater infrastructure that ensure whole of life performance. ²	TAMS, CMTEDD, EPD, ACTEW
Action 9 Improve planning, monitoring and compliance for stormwater management.	9.1 Develop a strategic asset management plan (subject to resourcing) for stormwater infrastructure (2015), including a mapping system to identify overland flow paths and WSUD devices within the network. ²	TAMS
	9.2 Monitor, assess and actively manage stormwater impacts and review asset performance and management. ²	TAMS
Action 10 Improve planning, information and regulation for flood management.	10.1 Undertake studies and release information on flood risk including Sullivan’s Creek, Yarralumla Creek, Long Gully Creek, Weston Creek, Woolshed Creek, Tuggeranong Creek, Isabella Weir, Ginninderra Creek systems or others if required.	CMTEDD, JACS/ESA
	10.2 Review existing plans and develop an ACT Flood and Risk Management Strategy, including assessment of future flood risks and infrastructure opportunities and pressures. ²	EPD, CMTEDD, TAMS, JACS/ESA
	10.3 Review planning codes relating to flood protection, flood planning standards, floodplain protection, retardation and on-site detention.	EPD/R&S





Outcome 2: A sustainable water supply used efficiently

Strategy 4: Secure long term water supplies

Actions	Milestones and timeframes	Lead
Action 11 Plan for long term water security.	11.1 Undertake future planning, including ¹ : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. continue to build capacity for long-term planning using best available data, modelling and analysis, including climate change data, multiple models, and techniques for assessing options (ongoing) b. review the 1-year-in-20 water restriction target planning principle as the basis for ACT water planning for water security (2015). 	EPD/Water, ACTEW, CMTEDD
	11.2 Develop a water resource plan under the Murray-Darling Basin Plan (2015) ¹ including issues such as ¹ : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. meeting the sustainable diversion limit requirements b. a risk management plan c. engaging with the Indigenous community on water values d. developing a water quality management plan and an environmental watering plan. 	EPD/Water ACTEW
Action 12 Strengthen water trading arrangements.	12.1 Enable inter-state water trading that enhances the ACT's long term water security and investigate an internal ACT water trading market ¹ : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. finalise interstate water trading arrangements to allow the transfer of water from Tantangara Dam to Googong Dam (2014) b. finalise general interstate water trading arrangements and rules under the Murray–Darling Basin Plan with the Murray–Darling Basin Authority (2014) c. investigate the scope for an internal ACT water trading market in the medium to long term. 	EPD/Water
Action 13 Investigate the benefits and costs of more diverse water supply options.	13.1 Investigate the benefits (water quality and efficiency of water delivery) from local water supply systems including ¹ : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. undertake the Inner North Stormwater Reticulation Network Trial and Evaluation b. build on existing work on other water recycling and reuse systems by June 2017 (Non Potable Water Master Plan), Managed Aquifer (MAR) Trial and ACTEW's studies on recycled water supply. 	EPD/Water HD, TAMS



Strategy 5: Manage and promote efficient and sustainable use of water

Actions	Milestones and timeframes	Lead
Action 14 Improve and monitor provision of water services.	14.1 Review agreed levels of service for water utilities in the ACT and monitor performance, consistent with principles agreed under the National Water Initiative. Review performance of ACTEW's licence(s) (ongoing): a. investigate opportunities for improved efficiency in the delivery of water supplies (reduced leakage).	EPD/Water, R&S/ EPA HD
Action 15 Encourage water users to conserve and use water wisely.	15.1 Explore the effectiveness of water pricing in promoting water use efficiency (2016).	EPD/Water, CMTEDD, ICRC
	15.2 Improve efficiency of non-residential water use: a. develop a Permanent Water Conservation Scheme for non-residential water users in consultation with industry (2014).	EPD/Water, R&S
	15.3 Deliver water efficiency programs and education to ACT residents, schools and businesses through ACTSmart Programs.	EPD/ Sustainability Programs





Outcome 3: A community that values and enjoys clean, healthy catchments and waterways

Strategy 6: Provide clean and safe water for the ACT

Actions	Milestones and timeframes	Lead
Action 16 Improve management of rivers, lakes and public space to promote recreational use and reduce risks to public health.	16.1 Review the ACT Guidelines for Recreational Water Quality, taking into account the latest version of the NHMRC guidelines for managing risks in recreational waters.	HD, EPD/EP&WR, EPA/TAMS/NCA
	16.2 Refine and develop new communication tools (Web, App etc) to provide public information and advice on water quality for recreational use to reduce risks to public health.	HD/EPA/TAMS/NCA

Strategy 7: Engage the community on understanding and contributing to a more sustainable city

Actions	Milestones and Timeframes	Lead
Action 17 Promote community involvement in management of ACT water resources.	17.1 Support community volunteering in assisting the management of ACT water resources, including on-ground activities, e.g. through grants and the provision of equipment and training.	EPD, ACTEW
	17.2 Public education, awareness raising and behavioural change campaigns on the role that individuals and businesses can play in: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> improving water quality and reducing stormwater contamination, including through a reduction in litter, sediment and nutrients entering waterways directing engagement with schools, businesses and low income households with water audits, assistance and behavior change programs education campaigns and ACTSmart programs aimed at residential water use increasing efficient water use through refinement and development of new and existing communication tools (Web, App etc) education concerning introduction of aquatic species(e.g. not releasing aquarium fish, Karma releases, moving fish between ponds). 	EPD, ACTEW
Action 18 Ensure that Indigenous and other cultural values are recognised in managing water planning and use.	18.1 Increasing our understanding of community and cultural values of water by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> engaging with the Aboriginal community on their cultural values of water enhancing and sharing knowledge on the community values of water in the Upper Murrumbidgee region consulting with community on values associated with green infrastructure. 	EPD, TAMS



Responsibilities for measuring performance indicators

Target	Targets from the Water Strategy and indicators	Responsibilities and notes
<p>Target 1 - The ACT will maintain or improve the quality of water across all ACT managed sub-catchments (30 year target)</p>	<p>a. The AUSRIVAS performance classifications for select reaches of major rivers are maintained or improved. The level of nutrients, organic material and sediment loads entering the ACT reach of the Murrumbidgee River is no greater than from a well-managed rural catchment.</p> <p>b. In the case of urban creeks, reduction in the intensity and volume of urban stormwater flows so that the runoff event that occurs on average once every three months is no larger than it was prior to development.</p> <p>c. In the case of regulated water supply catchment streams, provision of the base flow, riffle and channel maintenance flows, and special purpose flows, is in accordance with the ACT Environmental Flow Guidelines.</p> <p>d. In the case of natural ecosystems and modified ecosystems, protection of the base flow, riffle and channel maintenance flows, and special purpose flows, is in accordance with the ACT Environmental Flow Guidelines.</p>	<p>(a) Water Policy (EPD)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will utilise AUSRIVAS macroinvertebrates monitoring to meet our National River Health Program commitments. Reported through ACT Water Report. <p>(b) Water Policy (EPD)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water sensitive urban design is implemented in accordance with provisions within the Territory Plan. Reported through ESDD Annual Report. <p>(c, d) EPA (EPD)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitored through licensing arrangements and reported through ESDD Annual Report.
<p>Interim Target 1a - A measurable improvement in catchment health in areas (sub-catchments) that receive funding for on-ground works from the ACT Priority Project (Commonwealth funded, 2014-2019) (10 year target)</p>	<p>a. Median Total Phosphorus load from rural catchments less than 12 kg/km²/yr.</p> <p>b. Median Total Phosphorus load from urban catchments less than 20 kg/km²/yr.</p> <p>c. Median Organic material (measured as TOC) load from rural catchments less than 200 kg/km²/yr.</p> <p>d. Median Organic material (measured as TOC) load from urban catchments less than 500 kg/km²/yr.</p> <p>e. Median Suspended Solids load from rural catchments less than 5000 kg/km²/yr.</p> <p>f. Median Suspended Solids load from urban catchments less than 10,000 kg/km²/yr.</p>	<p>(a-f) Water Policy (EPD)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> [All indicators] Measured through monitoring component under the Basin Priority Project.



Target	Targets from the Water Strategy and indicators	Responsibilities and notes
Target 2 - Support living within the Sustainable Diversion Limit (SDL) set for the ACT (30 year target)	a. Meeting the TAWW 25% reduction in mains water usage per capita target by 2023. b. Meeting the 40% target under the WSUD code for reducing mains water usage in new developments, extensions and refurbishments. c. Maintaining the measures set under the Permanent Water Conservation Scheme and investigate any possible extension of the measures.	(a) ACTEW and Water Policy (EPD) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measured by utility and reported through ACTEW Annual Report and National Performance Report (Utilities). (b) Planning Approval/Regulation Services and Sustainability Programs (EPD) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measured by Sustainability Programs through ACTSmart Household programs and reported through EPD Annual Report. Water sensitive urban design is implemented in accordance with provisions within the Territory Plan. (c) ACTEW and Water Policy (EPD) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measured by utility and reported through ACTEW Annual Report.
Interim Target 2a - Measurable reduction in mains consumption for non-residential water use (5 year target)	a. Measurable reduction in mains consumption for non-residential water use (against 2013 levels) (5 year target, 2019). b. Reduction in water use through schools (overall water use, litres per student per annum water use) through the ACTSmart Schools Program.	(a) ACTEW and Water Policy (EPD) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measured by ACTEW and reported through ACTEW Annual Report. (b) Sustainability Programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reported by ACTSmart School Program in EPD Annual Report.
Target 3 - Increased community understanding and participation in managing and improving waterways in the ACT (30 year target)	Increased number of community hours devoted to management of aquatic ecosystems (e.g., wetlands, creeks etc) (compared to 2013). Increased initiatives generated by the community for catchment improvements. Number of Waterwatch volunteers/sites being monitored monthly and annually (and community monitoring integrated into ACT Water Report). Waterwatch monitoring includes data of changes in community behaviour and impacts on water quality e.g., observed litter, damage to river banks, illegal activities etc. Number of education campaigns delivered on improving water quality.	(a-c) Sustainability Programs (EPD) and Natural Resource Protection (TAMS) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data captured through urban wetland groups, Waterwatch events, other relevant community events supported by ACT Government, relevant community data (e.g. Catchment Groups, Greening Australia). (d-e) Water Policy and Sustainability Programs (EPD) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measured and reported through community education component under the Basin Priority Project and EPD Annual Report.



Target	Targets from the Water Strategy and indicators	Responsibilities and notes
Interim Target 3a - The ACT's community's awareness and understanding of waterways, their functions, and why their protection is vital has increased (5 year target)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Number of education campaigns delivered on improving water quality. b. Number of education campaigns delivered on domestic behaviour regarding water demand and quality management (gardening waste, car washing, detergents, fertiliser etc.). c. Number of education campaigns delivered on improving awareness of waterway function and protection (e.g. species reliant on good water quality such as platypus, native fish, waterbugs and frogs). 	<p>(a) Water Policy and Sustainability Programs (EPD)</p> <p>Measured and reported through community education component under the Basin Priority Project.</p> <p>(b) ACTEW and Sustainability Programs (EPD)</p> <p>Measured and reported through EPD annual reporting.</p> <p>(c) Sustainability Programs (EPD)</p> <p>Reported through EPD Annual Report.</p>
Interim Target 3b - Decreased evidence of gross pollutants and litter in urban sub-catchments of the ACT (5 year target)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. A reduction in gross pollutants collected from GPTs (measured in kg, compared year to year, and based on weather). 	<p>(a) Roads (TAMS)</p> <p>Reporting through TAMS Annual Report.</p>





Appendix 1

Environment and Planning Directorate (EPD)

The Environment and Planning Directorate promotes sustainable living and resource use and strengthens the Territory's response to climate change.

The Environment Division within EPD has responsibility for the legislative framework for conservation and environmental protection, and includes: Environment Protection (EP); Water resources (WR); Nature Conservation Policy (NC), in particular the *Water Resources Act 2007*, the *Environment Protection Act 1997* and *Nature Conservation Act 1980*. The Division is also responsible for the ACT Water Strategy, ACT Nature Conservation Strategy; action plans for threatened species and ecological communities, pest and weed strategies, research on local flora and fauna, preparing Plans of Management for non-urban parks and reserves in the ACT, provision of environmental advice on development and planning and has significant input into bushfire planning and management of fisheries.

The Climate Change, Energy and Sustainability Division develops policies on climate change, energy and environmental sustainability more widely and administers and helps design a number of ACTSmart sustainability programs that impact on natural resource management in the ACT. EPD also has planning divisions responsible for strategic planning initiatives to achieve quality urban development including the review of codes and guidelines.

The Construction Services Division deals with construction occupations and licensing, utilities, land regulation and compliance, ACTSmart sustainability programs, and provision of spatial and other information. The Regulation Services branch plays a key role relating to urban planning, including water aspects.

Territory and Municipal Services Directorate (TAMS)

The Territory and Municipal Services Directorate plans, develops and delivers a range of municipal services for the people of the ACT. The Parks and Conservation Service within TAMS is responsible for planning and management of parks, reserves and rural lands. It protects and conserves the natural resources of the ACT and promotes appropriate recreational, educational and scientific uses of our parks and reserves. City Services within TAMS is responsible for city-wide cleaning and open space asset maintenance.

Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate (CMTEDD)

The Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate provides strategic advice and support to the Chief Minister, the Treasurer, the Minister for Economic Development and the Cabinet on policy development, financial and economic policy, service delivery and whole of government issues, and facilitates the implementation of government priorities.

The Economic Development focus is on land release, facilitating business development, investment, sport and recreation, tourism and events, arts, and other government activity, often in coordination with the private sector, to increase the economic performance of the ACT.

Health Directorate (HD)

The Health Directorate provides a comprehensive range of health services to the people of the Australian Capital Territory. Health Directorate sets health policy; plans the delivery of health services; while ensuring these services meet community needs.

Education and Training Directorate (ED)

The Education and Training Directorate delivers high quality education services through government schools, registers non-government schools and administers vocational education and training in the ACT.

Community Services Directorate

The Community Services Directorate has responsibility for a wide range of human services functions in the ACT; including public and community housing services.



Justice and Community Safety Directorate (JACS)

The Justice and Community Safety Directorate is responsible for a wide range of activities and services including emergencies. The ACT Emergency Services Agency (ESA) within JACS is charged with providing emergency management services to the Canberra community. The ESA comprises the ACT Ambulance Service, ACT Fire & Rescue, the ACT Rural Fire Service, the ACT State Emergency Service and the ESA Support Services.

ACT Electricity and Water (ACTEW)

ACTEW Corporation Limited (ACTEW) is a government owned company with assets and investments in water and wastewater.

For more information

The ACT Water Strategy 2014–44: Striking the Balance

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