



Statement from Dr Wendy Craik, Chief Executive, Murray-Darling Basin Commission

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Recent rain welcome but more needed in the south

The recent rain in the northern part of the Basin was very welcome, but will not be sufficient to solve the water shortages along the River Murray in the south of the Basin.

Good rainfall in the northern half of the Basin during December has resulted in good flows moving down the Darling River and into Menindee Lakes.

The storage of Menindee Lakes has increased to 232 GL and a total of 400 GL is expected. This compares to a total storage in Menindee Lakes of about 1700 GL.

The more recent rain in the Warrego River catchment in southern Queensland has also caused very significant flooding. However, only a small fraction of this water is expected to eventually make its way to the Darling River and then Menindee Lakes.

An excellent piece of news is that some of the wetlands in the northern half of the Basin – which have been dry for some years, are now getting some valuable watering.

In the southern half of the Basin, good falls of rain were also recorded last weekend along the River Murray and its upper tributaries.

However the response in streamflows was only small and will probably result in only 50 to 80 Gigalitres of extra water (see graph below). This is equivalent to less than 1% of the total system storage.

The main catchment areas in the Victorian Alps and Snowy Mountains of New South Wales are still very dry after many years of below average rainfall. It will take sustained heavy rainfall to provide a significant increase in inflows and hence lift storage levels.

Visitors to the MDBC website should keep an eye on the weekly report of river operations at www.mdbc.gov.au/subs/river-info/weekly-report/current_wr.pdf

