

South Australia's River Murray Flow and Use Report - Quarter Three 2020-21

Issued 18 June 2021

Key Messages

- The Government of South Australia is committed to open and transparent water management and accounting along the length of the River Murray.
- This report provides a summary of river flows at key locations along the River Murray in South Australia (SA), water used for critical human water needs (CHWN) and consumptive purposes and water for the environment.
- A total of 710.5 gigalitres (GL) flowed into SA between January and March 2021, which was all regulated flow delivery (including SA Entitlement, consumptive and environmental water trade). A total of 23.0 GL of Entitlement was deferred to support CHWN in future years.
- Of the 710.5 GL delivered, 176.1 GL was used for general consumptive purposes (primarily irrigation) and 50.2 GL to support CHWN and town water supplies. Conveyance and water left in-river (planned environmental water) totalled 267.3 GL and 216.9 GL was held environmental water.
- Environmental watering activities at wetlands on Chowilla and in the lower Murray supported vegetation health and provided habitat for a range of native plants and animals.
- At the Lower Lakes and Coorong, water for the environment was used to maintain a continuous flow of over 149.6 GL through the barrage fishways and allow migration of young-of-year diadromous fish (i.e. congolli and common galaxias) from the Coorong to Lake Alexandrina. A small flow pulse was released in early January from the Goolwa barrage to provide suitable conditions in the Murray estuary for black bream spawning and recruitment.
- The water levels in the Lower Lakes were managed to slowly recede to a minimum of around 0.6 m AHD, which protected critical wetland habitat for threatened species like the southern pygmy perch.

Table 1 – River Murray Flow and Use in South Australia 2020-21 (GL)

	2020-21	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total - Year to Date
Water Flows (GL)	Flow at the SA border	890.4	1072.5	710.5	-	2673.4
	Regulated	428.7	1072.5	710.5	-	2211.7
	Unregulated	461.7	0.0	0.0	-	461.7
	Flow at Lock 1	849.0	871.4	450.5	-	2170.9
	Barrage release	688.1	473.2	149.6	-	1310.9
Regulated Water Use / Purpose (GL)	CHWN and town water supply	53.2	44.0	50.2	-	147.4
	Consumptive	37.2	159.4	176.1	-	372.7
	Environmental water	98.9	582.8	216.9	-	898.6
	Conveyance / remain in-river	239.4	286.3	267.3	-	793.0
	Other	0.0	0.0	0.0	-	0.0
	Total Regulated Water Use	428.7	1072.5	710.5	-	2211.7
Deferred Water	Into Storage	0.0	0.0	23.0	0.0	23.0
	Delivered	15.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	15.2

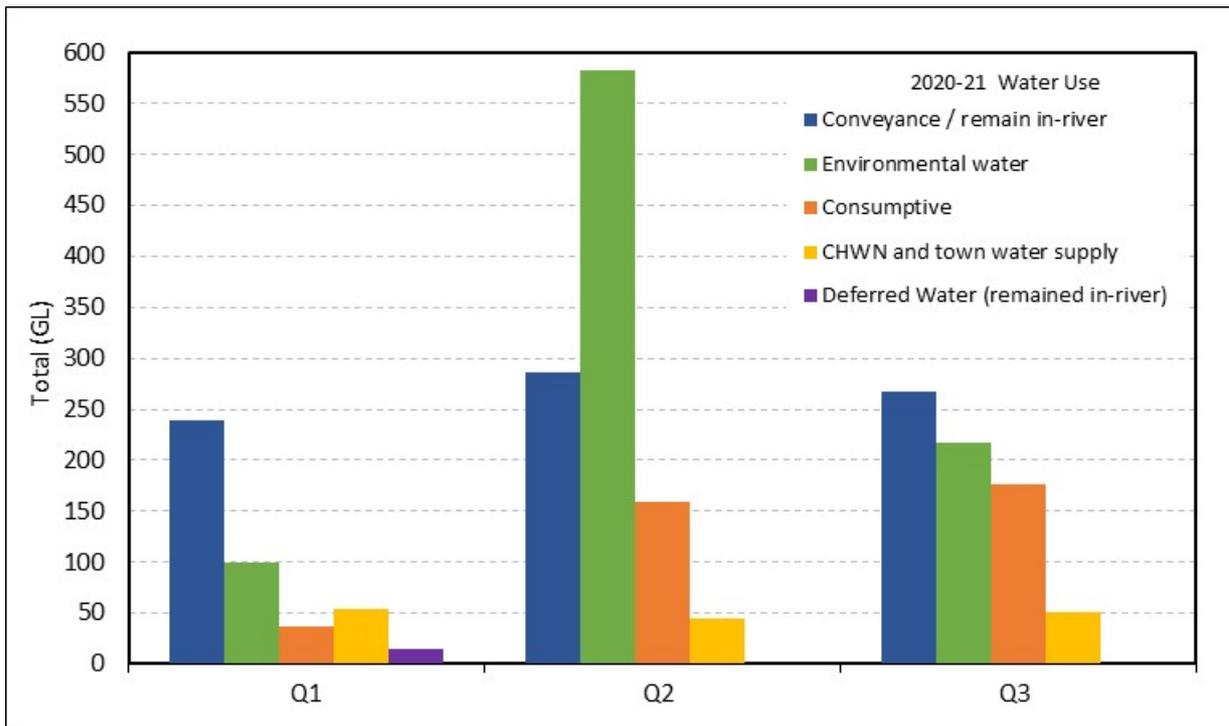


Figure 1 – Regulated River Murray Water Use in South Australia

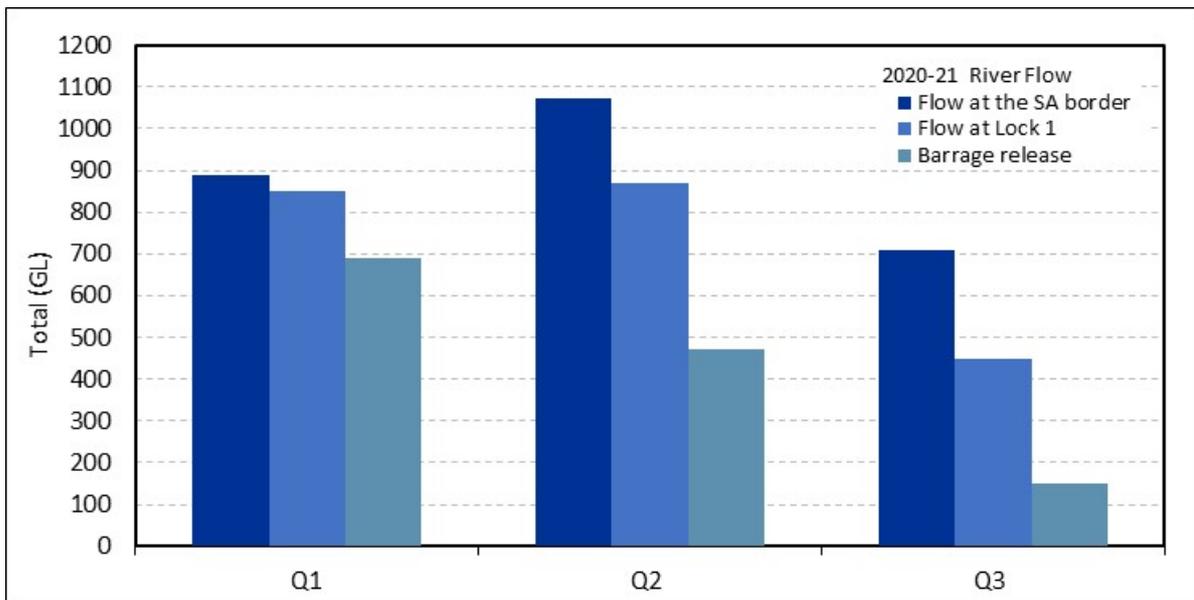


Figure 2 – River Murray Flow in South Australia

Technical Information

Water Flows: Total flow volume passing a specified location

- **Flow at the South Australian Border** – the total volume passing the SA border, as reported by the Murray-Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) and publically available at <https://riverdata.mdba.gov.au/flow-south-australia-calculated>. This has been separated into its two components.
 - **Regulated Flow** – the total volume of regulated (planned) flow provided to SA. This includes SA Entitlement, consumptive and environmental water trade and the Lindsay River Allowance.
 - **Unregulated Flow** – the additional, uncontrolled volume, above the regulated flow to SA. This is calculated using monthly data provided by the MDBA. Information on unregulated flow events is included in SA’s River Murray Flow Reports available at: <https://www.waterconnect.sa.gov.au/River-Murray/SitePages/River%20Murray%20Flow%20Reports.aspx>.
- **Flow at Lock 1** – the total volume passing over Lock 1, as reported by the MDBA and publically available at <https://riverdata.mdba.gov.au/lock-1-downstream>.
- **Barrage Release** – the total flow over the barrages, as calculated daily by the Department for Environment and Water (DEW) and published weekly in SA’s River Murray Flow Report.

Water Use / Purpose

- **Critical Human Water Needs (CHWN) and town water supply** – the total volume extracted from the River Murray for Metropolitan Adelaide, SA Country Towns and stock, domestic and industrial purposes. This includes both metered and estimated use from the quarterly account reconciliation process.
- **Consumptive use** – the total volume used for general consumptive purposes, primarily irrigation use. This includes both metered and estimated use from the quarterly account reconciliation process.
- **Environmental Water** – the total volume of held environmental water that is delivered for environmental outcomes either upstream of Lake Alexandrina or in the Lower Lakes and Coorong. This is calculated and provided monthly by the MDBA to DEW from a combination of metered, estimated and modelled data held by DEW, MDBA and the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder. It includes all SA-held entitlements and environmental allocations traded into SA, either for a direct delivery or from a return flow event. Information on environmental watering activities is included in SA’s River Murray Flow Report.
- **Conveyance / remain in-river** – water delivered for conveyance purposes and any unallocated Entitlement that remains in-river as planned environmental water. It also includes water delivered/allocated for consumptive purposes that was not taken.

Deferred Water

- **Into Storage** – water that has been deferred in accordance with clause 91 and Schedule G of the *Murray-Darling Basin Agreement*. Information on SA’s deferral and water storage plans are available at <https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/topics/river-murray/south-australias-storage-right>. This is not part of the regulated flow and use volumes in the table as it is held back in an upstream storage and not delivered to SA.
- **Delivered** – deferred water delivered to SA (either ordered, forced delivery or spill) is part of the regulated flow and use volumes in the table.

Other Key Information

- **Water Use** – a preliminary assessment based on actual and estimated data and is subject to a final assessment and reconciliation at the end of water year. This data reflects the best data available at the date of issue and replaces any data provided for previous quarters in the water year.
- **Year to Date** – the cumulative flow volume and water use for the quarters reported to date. Historical annual reports on water use in South Australia can be accessed on the Murray-Darling Basin Authority’s [website](#).
- **Data** – all values included in this report have been rounded to one decimal place. This may result in minor variations from other reported values.

Further Information

For more information on SA's water allocations or to sign up to receive the weekly River Murray Flow Report:

- Visit the [DEW website](#)
- Email DEW:RiverMurrayOps@sa.gov.au
- Subscribe to the River Murray Flow report [here](#).

To speak with someone about your water allocation or account:

- Call the water licensing office on (08) 8595 2053
- Email water licensing on DEW.WaterLicensingBerri@sa.gov.au

To download daily flow data along the River Murray:

- Visit the [MDBA Website](#)