

Much-needed extra water for the Murray River's Lower Lakes

South Australia's Lower Lakes, near the mouth of the River Murray, will receive an additional 170 billion litres of water from the north, following agreements reached between the Australian Government and Basin states in mid-January.



Credit: ScienceImage/Rob Fitzpatrick

NSW agreed to release 148 billion litres (or gigalitres (GL)) of upper Darling floodwaters from the Menindee Lakes to help keep inflows to the lower Darling and Murray above critical levels. The independent Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder (CEWH) subsequently approved the release of a further 20 GL of water from the Menindee Lakes.

Previously the South Australian Government had committed to return 170 GL to the Lower Lakes' Ramsar-listed wetland complex. The combined decisions will see 338 GL of water delivered to the Lower Lakes this year, reducing the risk of acidification and improving habitat for waterbirds and other species.