

Survey Findings

Preliminary Findings from the Community Survey

The following offers a brief overview of findings from a random telephone survey conducted with 581 people across Goulburn, Marulan and Tarago. The Water Management Strategy will apply across these three urban areas, and therefore respondents from each area were included. The survey included 491 people from Goulburn, 63 from Marulan, and 27 from Tarago.

More detailed results are available from Council.

Attitudes in relation to water

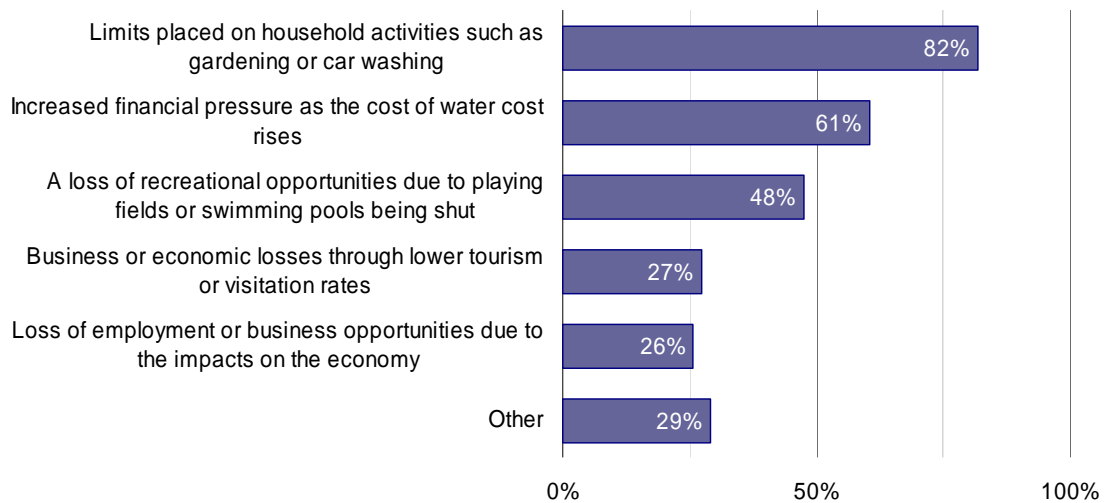
- People generally support the need for a sustainable water management strategy.
- They feel that water is a problem and one of the most significant limitations for the community.
- They are aware that there are broader water management issues to consider, not just water supply.
- People have made considerable individual efforts to reduce water use and are doing what they can. At the same time, just over half of people felt that individuals could do more.
- There are mixed views about how to balance the needs of different groups – businesses, community, high water users.
- Just over half of people said they would be prepared to pay more to have a secure and sustainable water supply. 29% were not prepared to pay more and 13% did not express a view one way or the other.
- Almost all recognised that the management of sewage was as important as the management of the water supply.
- People were less likely to have a view about whether the disposal of treated sewage was a potential environmental issue. This suggests people may need more information about the issue.

Developing the Water Management Strategy

- People are keen to be involved in the development of the Water Management Strategy and support the process of consultation.
 - They believe a range of people need to be involved, including individuals, businesses and industry, scientists, engineers and other experts, and government departments and Council.
 - Nearly two thirds of people said they would like to be involved through viewing project updates, information, and providing feedback through the website.
 - Over half said they would like to participate in community workshops
 - 43% said they would like to provide formal submissions to Council.
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Impacts of the Current Situation

From a list of options, people were asked to identify impacts they had experienced due to the current water situation.



'Other' impacts identified included the way the local area, parks and gardens look, loss of water quality, effects on morale and mental health, effects on property values, effects on agriculture, and loss of lifestyle.

As a result, people reported they had made significant changes in their lives.

Preliminary views regarding a range of potential water management options

People were asked to respond to the following question, to provide preliminary views of a range of water management options.

Q. I am going to read out a list of water management options that could be used in a short or long term strategy. None of the following options are currently proposed. We are just asking for initial views. Survey findings will be tested by technical and further community analysis as part of the consultation process. For each, can you give me your preliminary response – tell me if you think they would be desirable, undesirable, or you don't know?

A majority of people generally supported the range of listed options.

Almost all (90% plus) identified the following as desirable:

- harvesting rainwater and the use of rainwater tanks
- the use of recycled water for the purposes of business and industry
- storage and use of stormwater for non-drinking purposes
- the use of grey water from bathroom or laundry for domestic gardening and toilet flushing
- the use of recycled sewage water for the watering of public parks and gardens

- policies to enforce the installation of water saving technology (such as water saving showerheads), and
- the use of recycled sewage water for domestic gardening or toilet flushing.

At least three quarters of people supported the following options as desirable:

- community education
- a regional water supply scheme
- construction of pipelines for emergency water use
- raising dam walls to increase capacity
- the use of recycled sewage water for the purposes of business or industry
- storage and use of stormwater for drinking purposes, and
- construction of a pipeline to pump water from the Shoalhaven River or from the ACT.

'Higher water rates to pay for sustainable water management strategies' was the option least frequently identified as desirable (39% of survey participants).

People were more evenly split about other options, and a number were undecided. This may suggest further information about these options is required.

The use of 'highly treated recycled sewage water by returning it to the dam for use as drinking water' was perceived as desirable by 47% of survey respondents. 41% said it was undesirable, and 12% said they did not know.

Options which attracted the highest percentages of 'don't knows' at this stage, included:

- cloud seeding
- targeted water restrictions for higher water users
- covering dams to limit evaporation
- the use of recycled sewage water for drinking purposes
- the reduction of environmental water releases from dams to make more water available for human consumption
- the construction of more dams, and
- use of bore water.

People were asked to identify any other options that they would like to see considered at this stage. (The consultation process will continue to invite such suggestions).

Almost all of the extra suggested options were covered by those previously outlined, but with some additional and more specific details (such as locality) provided.

Preliminary Findings from the Business Survey

A survey of businesses has also been conducted across the three areas. This survey is still continuing, but the following outlines some initial findings from 107 businesses.

The questions were the same as for the community survey. However, businesses were provided the options of responding to the survey in a face to face interview with an interviewer, taking the survey to complete and return to the interviewer at an agreed pick-up time, or taking the survey to complete and returning it in a Reply Paid envelope to UrbisJHD.

In general, there appear to be similar views across businesses and the community.

There are, however, a small number of differences to note:

- Just over half of businesses agreed that 'water restrictions have shown the community that we used too much water before.' (73% of community respondents).
- Around 44% of businesses agreed 'there needs to be stronger laws to regulate water use', and 36% disagreed. (67% of community respondents agreed and 22% disagreed).
- Businesses were fairly evenly split between those who agreed they 'were willing to pay more to have a secure and sustainable water supply' (41%) and those who did not agree (40%). Around 18% said they did not have a view either way or did not know. (56% of the community respondents agreed they were prepared to pay more, 29% disagreed, and 15% did not have a view either way or did not know).
- 40% of business respondents agreed that the 'disposal of treated sewage is an environmental issue in Goulburn' (54% of community respondents). 22% of businesses did not think it was an issue (19% of community respondents), while 38% did not have a view either way or said they did not know (27% of community respondents).

Businesses generally supported a similar range of water management options as did the community. However, they were more likely to identify the following as undesirable:

- higher water rates to pay for sustainable water management (71% undesirable and 8% don't know)
- permanent water restrictions (58% undesirable and 7% don't know)
- the reduction of environmental water releases from dams into rivers so that more water is available for human use (47% undesirable and 11% don't know)
- targeted restrictions for those who use significant levels of water (eg business, agriculture and industry) (41% undesirable, and 15% don't know).

Further analysis will be undertaken as business surveys continue to arrive.