

Monday, 15 December 2008

RIVER MURRAY ALLOCATIONS TO STAY AT 15PC

River Murray irrigation allocations will remain at 15 percent as the current extreme drought continues in the Murray-Darling Basin.

Minister for the River Murray Karlene Maywald says only 140 gigalitres flowed into the system during November, well below the long-term November average of 771 GL.

“There was a very small improvement of 35 GL allocated to South Australia, which has been reserved for critical human needs in 2009-10,” Minister Maywald said.

“In the six months to November 30, only 1415 GL has flowed into the River Murray system compared with the long-term average for that period of 7201 GL.

“However, with last week’s good rains throughout the catchment, an update will be provided to irrigators on how allocations may be impacted as soon as inflow data is available.”

The total volume of water in storage in Hume and Dartmouth Reservoirs, Lake Victoria and Menindee Lakes is currently at 24 percent (2211 GL), compared with 19pc (1782 GL) at the same time last year.

Salinity levels above Lock 1 remain fairly low. However, downstream of Lock 1 salinity levels remain high due to low water levels. Salinity in Lake Alexandrina (at Milang) is currently 4742 EC compared to about 2964 EC at the same time last year. Salinity in Lake Albert (at Meningie) is currently 6885 EC compared to about 2993 EC at the same time last year.

The water level in Lake Alexandrina (at Milang) is currently –0.51m AHD, compared to about –0.05m AHD at the same time last year. The water level in Lake Albert (at Meningie) is currently –0.41m AHD, compared to about 0.03m AHD at the same time last year.

For more information about conditions in the River Murray or wider Murray-Darling Basin visit www.dwlbc.sa.gov.au/murray/drought/index.html