



## PRINCIPLES

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The Australian Greens Victoria believe that:

1. Access to clean and adequate water is fundamental to life.
2. Victoria's freshwater resources are coming under increasing pressure as a result of climate change and growing human demand.
3. The health of Victoria's catchments, rivers, wetlands, groundwater systems and estuaries underpins the health of our environment, communities, agriculture and industry.
4. We have a responsibility to restore, maintain and protect Victoria's rivers and freshwater environments as part of our natural heritage and future prosperity.
5. As a scarce and fluctuating resource, Victoria's major water supplies must be publicly owned and managed through a system of regulated water allocation.
6. Victoria's water management strategies must be environmentally and economically sustainable. Their objectives must include the preservation or improvement of ecosystem health.
7. Pricing regimes for all water uses should be structured to reflect scarcity, true delivery costs and to encourage efficient use, while ensuring that essential use to meet human needs is affordable for all.
8. Local communities, including local aboriginal people, must have the opportunity to participate in water catchment planning and management.
9. Government should not profit from the supply of water.
3. A water allocation framework that provides legal recognition of and protection for all environmental water, including a positive obligation on decision-makers to ensure that an environmental water reserve be maintained to preserve the environmental values and health of water ecosystems.
4. A water allocation framework that explicitly recognizes Aboriginal cultural values and native title rights, provides legal recognition of and protection for cultural flows, and provides statutory roles in water governance for Traditional Owners.
5. Restricted extraction from groundwater systems unless an independent hydrogeological assessment verifies that recharge rates will not be exceeded and extraction would be sustainable.
6. A water allocation framework which is transparent, subject to regular independent review and resource assessments, based on best available scientific analysis, to check on the health of water resources (including long term decline in water availability), and determine what actions must be taken.
7. Planning and management of the equitable use of Murray Darling Basin water resources that limits extraction to environmentally sustainable levels, maintains the health and resilience of the river and its ecosystems, and supports sustainable food production and rural enterprises for the long-term viability and wellbeing of basin communities. At a minimum we must meet our obligations under the current Murray Darling Basin Plan.
8. Return of water to environmental flows through improved water efficiency measures for irrigated agriculture and buy back of water entitlements in severely degraded and over-allocated systems.

## AIMS

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### The Ecological Health of River and Groundwater Systems

1. A statutory framework which requires environmental outcomes to be met to protect water sources and their dependent ecosystems, consistent with the National Water Initiative, including a permanent prohibition on new large-scale dams on Victorian rivers.
2. A comprehensive, adequate and representative system of reserves for Victoria's unique and high conservation value freshwater ecosystems.
9. Rigorous environmental impact assessments, prior to commencement, for schemes involving re-insertion of waste-water into an aquifer.
10. Action to address threats to Victoria's freshwater systems such as land clearance, mining, drilling and exploration, erosion, sedimentation and pollution.
11. Improved riparian quality and connectivity, by amending Crown water-frontage grazing licenses to reward responsible management.
12. Adequately resourced waterway rehabilitation and farmer extension programs that encourage ecologically sustainable water management.



13. The elimination of all polluting and untreated sewage ocean outfalls, and the reporting of all existing sewage discharge on the National Pollution Inventory.
14. Prioritise environmental needs in the re-allocation of water entitlements freed up by the de-commissioning of coal-fired power plants as Victoria transitions to renewable energy.
15. Supporting irrigation communities to adapt to reduced water availability, by integrating structural adjustment and regional development funding into effective transition strategies.
16. The treatment and/or storage of wastewater from industrial, domestic and agricultural recycling via systems as isolated as reasonably possible from the possibility of environmental leakage, which are as close to the source as possible
17. supply augmentation options such as desalination and new dams.
24. To ascertain the most efficient means of securing a sustainable water supply for Victoria and Melbourne's future through independent review of all studies already undertaken or currently being undertaken on this matter.
25. An increased community awareness of the large quantities of water used in water intensive industries.
26. Public ownership and control of major water infrastructure systems.
27. Victoria to adopt targets for reduction in water consumption and increase in recycling and reuse.
28. Comprehensive minimum water efficiency standards for new residential, commercial and government owned buildings and industries as well as new domestic and commercial appliances.

### Water Conservation and Provision

17. Maintained and updated programs for monitoring and removing toxicants from water supplies.
18. Integrating Victoria's groundwater and surface water regulatory regimes to create a single system governing the extraction and allocation of all water uses throughout the water cycle.
19. To ensure all bulk surface and groundwater supplies for commercial, industrial, agricultural and private discretionary use are priced to encourage sustainable levels of consumption as well as to reflect the true environmental and social costs of extraction.
20. To introduce mandatory targets for water corporations, enforceable by financial penalties, that result in a reduction of extraction of water from bulk surface water and groundwater to sustainable levels.
21. Monitoring and reporting of water quality to ensure that Victorian drinking water consistently meets or exceeds World Health Organization (WHO) and National Drinking Water standards.
22. To ensure that sustainable water use is a compulsory element of planning in Victorian water reform legislation and agreements, including for new developments, mining, infrastructure and agricultural projects.
23. Urban water resource management that is consistent with integrated water cycle management principles, prioritising water efficiency, recycling, re-use and rainwater harvesting over expensive, environmentally damaging
29. Upgrading the water efficiency of residential, commercial and government-owned buildings, by implementing a mass retrofit program through a mix of government investment, incentives and regulation.
30. Banning native forest logging within water catchments.