

5 June 2020

Gwydir Regulated River Water Source

Allocations

As a result of small inflows in May, there is an **increased in allocation of 0.27 per cent for general security** water users in the Gwydir regulated river water source, bringing the total allocation for this 2019/20 water year to 2.17 per cent of entitlement.

The Gwydir catchment received near average rainfall in May and the water captured in storage increased by two gigalitres (GL), bringing the total to about 190 GL.

The resource improvements since February 2020 have been welcome. This latest increase, filled the essential supply account and boosted recovery of the delivery loss account, improving water deliverability. The system is slowly recovering resilience for any return of extreme dry conditions.

Since February 2018, there has been around 140 gigalitres (GL) of inflow into Copeton Dam. Despite the improvements, **this is the third lowest 28-month inflow volume on record**. The lowest inflow was a century ago with 64 GL in 28 months to May 1920.

Resource outlook for 2020/21

- Water for all critical consumptive and non-consumptive needs including local utilities, are secure for the 2020/21 water year.
- High priority licence holders including **Local Water Utilities, Domestic and Stock**, and **High Security** water access licenses can expect full (100 per cent) allocations on 1 July.
- Likewise, **Supplementary** entitlement holders can expect a full (100 per cent) allocation.
- As **General Security** and **Environmental Contingency Allowance** account balances accrue on a continuous basis, the announced allocations will commence at 0 per cent on 1 July for the new (2020/21) water year, in accordance with the water sharing plan.
- Water remaining in general security accounts after 30 June will be fully available in 2020/21.
- General Security water users have an account limit of 1.5 ML/share (150 per cent of entitlement) and an annual use limit of 3 ML/share (300 per cent of entitlement).

Current allocations

2019/20	High Security	General Security	Drought Stage
Gwydir Regulated River Water Source	100%	2.17%	 Stage 2

Dam levels (as at 2 June 2020)

Copeton Dam is 12.8 per cent full – falling – currently holding about 190 GL. This time last year the storage was at 9.7 per cent full.

Drought stage

The NSW Extreme Events Policy introduced a staged approach from one to four to manage extreme circumstances such as severe droughts or poor water quality events. The Gwydir regulated river water source is at Stage 2 criticality based on improving conditions and outlooks. However, the situation is being closely monitored and water users are advised to exercise caution in case dry conditions return.

Further information on drought stages can be found at: www.industry.nsw.gov.au/water/allocations-availability/droughts-floods/extreme-events

Key facts

- Copeton Dam received 40 mm of rainfall in May 2020.
- Inflows into Copeton Dam were about 2.8 GL in May 2020.
- Downstream tributary inflows contributed about 0.5 GL in May 2020.
- Delivery loss and ECA accounts have recovered, boosting water deliverability.
- Small inflows in May provide an increased allocation for general security water users of 0.27 per cent, bringing their total allocation to 2.17 per cent of entitlement this (2019/20) water-year.
- Essential requirements are secure for 2020/21. However, if extreme dry conditions return, drought contingency measures may be needed again to meet critical needs beyond 2020/21.
- Water users can expect prudent delivery measures to save water to continue during 2020/21 such as block releases and the maximum use of natural inflows.

Seasonal climate outlook

The Bureau of Meteorology seasonal outlook for June to August indicates likely average to wetter than average conditions. Daytime temperatures over this period are equally likely to be above or below average and nights are very likely to be above average.

The Bureau of Meteorology states that the El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) is most likely to remain neutral over winter but may cool towards La Niña levels by the end of winter. The Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) is currently neutral. The eastern Indian Ocean is likely to remain warmer than usual, maintaining the wetter than average winter outlook for Australia. However, caution should be exercised with using IOD forecasts issued during autumn, as they are less accurate than forecasts made at other times of the year.

For further details: www.bom.gov.au/climate/outlooks/#/rainfall/summary

Further information

The next water allocation announcement will be on 1 July 2020 with the opening water allocations for the 2020/21 water year. The next water allocation statement will be on Friday 7 August 2020.

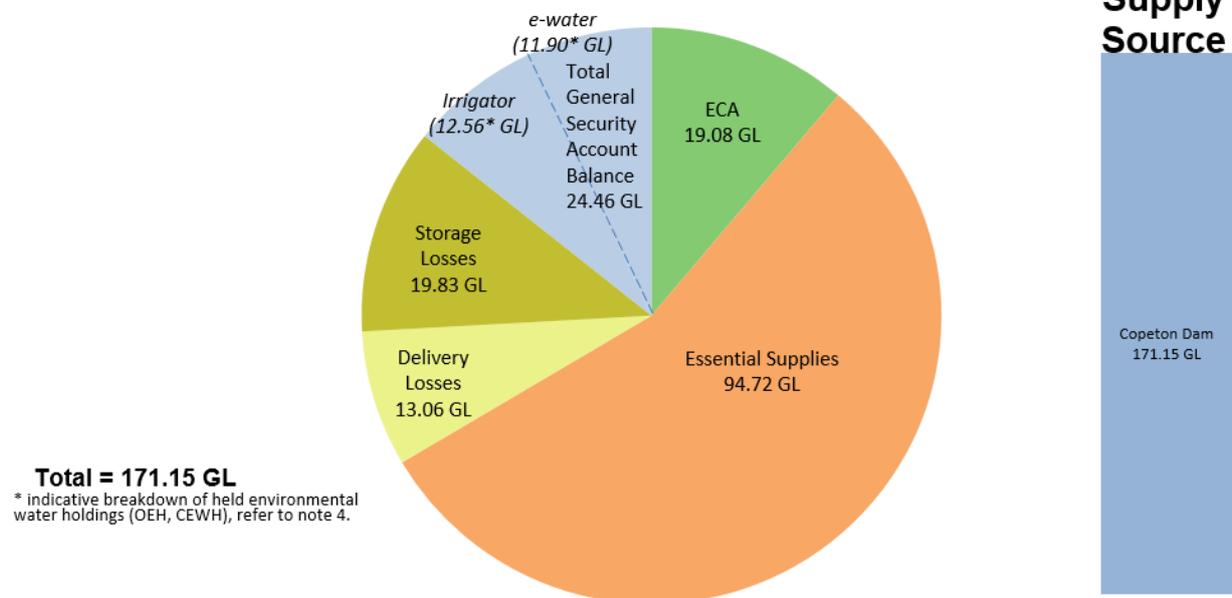
Information on available water determinations and water sharing plans is available on the Department of Industry website: www.industry.nsw.gov.au/water

Resource Assessment Data Sheet

Resource Distribution (as at 31 May 2020)	Volume (GL)
Copeton Dam active volume	171.15
<i>less</i>	
Storage Losses ⁽¹⁾	19.83
Essential Supplies ⁽²⁾	94.72
Environmental Contingency Allowance (ECA)	19.08
Delivery Losses ⁽³⁾	13.06
General Security Held Environmental Water (HEW) Account Balance ⁽⁴⁾	11.90
General Security Irrigator Account Balance	12.56

See notes below.

Resource Distribution as at 31 May 2020 Gwydir Regulated River Water Source



Notes:

- (1) Storage Losses – evaporation based on forecast storage behaviour over 2 years at maximum historical rates.
- (2) Essential Supplies – water required to be set aside under the water sharing plan to provide for Towns, Stock, Domestic, High Security and riverine environments. Includes stock and domestic replenishments, delivery loss allowance and end-of-system flow requirements. This is offset by minimum forecast inflows to storage.
- (3) Delivery Losses - this account reflects the water needed to deliver general security water.
- (4) Held environmental water (HEW) – water administered by environmental water holders is being reported here, with the associated portion of general security allocation also identified in the above pie chart and table. The reporting of held environmental water is indicative only, prior to reconciliation of usage and net trade. General Security HEW estimated to be 11.90 GL and High Security HEW is estimated to be 0.66 GL. These entitlements are held and/or managed either singly or jointly by various environmental holder groups, including the NSW environment water holder and the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder (CEWH). Details on environmental holdings can be found on individual agency websites.

Water Allocation Statement

Water availability and allocation update



Resource Assessment as at 31 May 2020

Volumes in GL	Budget	Current	Additional	Balance
Storage Evaporation Loss	19.83	19.65	0.18	19.83
Essential Supplies for next 24 months	94.72	93.56	1.16	94.72
Delivery Loss (256 GL max)	13.06	12.61	0.45	13.06
ECA (90 GL max)	-	18.96	0.12	19.08
General Security (764.5 GL max)	-	23.07	1.40	24.46
Additional Resources for Sharing	-	3.30	-3.30	0.00
Total	-	171.15	0.00	171.15

General Security	Value	Unit
Incremental Increase CREDITED	1.40	GL
Available Water Determination	0.0027	ML per unit share

About 0.581 GL was released from Copeton Dam in May 2020. A combination of dam releases and downstream tributary inflows was utilised to meet demand of 0.822 GL of essential supply. There was no general security or environmental contingency allowance deliveries in May 2020.

Essential Supply demand	0.822 GL
General Security demand	0.000 GL
Total demand	0.822 GL
Release from Copeton Dam to meet demand	0.581 GL
Downstream tributary flows utilised to meet demand	0.241 GL

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