

MEDIA RELEASE

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\$6.3 million committed for better natural resource management

With the recent approval of five new sub-catchment plans, totalling more than \$2 million in funding, local natural resource management group, the Queensland Murray-Darling Committee (QMDC), reached a record investment in environmental projects in southern Queensland.

QMDC's CEO, Olwyn Crimp, said that, through funding from the Queensland and Australian Governments, QMDC had been working with over 120 farmers in the Border Rivers and Maranoa-Balonne catchments since 2000.

"Through our Sub-Catchment Planning program, clusters of farmers right across the region have been working together to establish and implement the most sustainable management practices for their local area," she said.

Despite the dry times, Olwyn said that the commitment from farmers has been growing.

"Our staff haven't been able to keep up with demand from farmers to be involved in Sub-Catchment Planning, and we now have over 60 groups working through the program.

"However, a lot of the projects we advise them to undertake, like fencing off vegetation and rivers, soil conservation works, and water use efficiency measures, can all be very expensive," she said.

That's why, besides technical and planning advice, QMDC uses government funds to help subsidise some of these projects.

"We have recently approved a further four groups for funding, which brings our total investment in this area up to \$6.3 million."

QMDC's Chair, Peter Blundell, said that, although impressive, this dollar investment was not QMDC's biggest achievement.

"There's no project that QMDC pays the whole cost for - we only ever support projects. So, despite the run of dry seasons, those farmers who have received funding have matched, and more than matched, that amount," he said.

"This means that our biggest achievement is having almost a third of our region under some form of natural resource or environmental management activity."

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Media contact/s

Written and released by:

Amelia Radford, Communication Officer, 07 4637 6234

More information:

Olwyn Crimp, CEO, 0429 376 271

Peter Blundell, Chair, 0428 644 624

Images

Below: QMDC and Landcare staff work with some 60 groups of farmers (of which 22 have been approved for funding) by meeting around the kitchen table, and in the paddock, to determine the best way to manage local environmental challenges.



For high resolution copies of these photos, please contact Amelia Radford on 07 4637 6234, or ameliar@qmdc.org.au