

2024

**THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

ELEVENTH ASSEMBLY

Statement

**ACT and Region Catchment Management Coordination Group
Annual Report 2023-24**

**Presented by
Suzanne Orr MLA
Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water
December 2024**

I am pleased to table the 2023-24 Annual Report for the ACT and Region Catchment Management Coordination Group.

The Coordination Group is a statutory body established under the *Water Resources Act 2007*.

The Group provides expert advice and supports coordination, cooperation, and collaboration across the ACT and region to address catchment management challenges. Its activities are guided by the ACT and Region Catchment Strategy 2016-2046.

The Coordination Group is independently chaired by Dr Maxine Cooper. Membership includes representatives from the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate, the National Capital Authority, the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, the Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council, the Yass Valley Council, the Snowy-Monaro Regional Council, NSW South-East Local Land Services, Icon Water, Upper Murrumbidgee Catchment Network, and a Water Expert.

The 2023-24 Annual Report details the key achievements of the Coordination Group in implementing the Catchment Strategy and sets out the priorities for 2024-25.

Case studies presented in the Annual Report depict tangible examples of collaboration across government and with community to improve the health of our catchment and waterways.

Over the course of the financial year, the Group's work has included:

- Positive community engagement and information sharing through the Upper Murrumbidgee Catchment Network and the Australian River Restoration Centre
- Developing and reviewing policies, plans and management practices to support a sustainable upper Murrumbidgee Catchment and River
- Advocating for better protection of the upper Murrumbidgee River across a range of forums, including a submission to the Australian Government that emphasised the need to increase the quantity and improve quality and flexibility of water releases from Tantangara Dam.

The Coordination Group consulted with several academic, policy and regulatory experts throughout the year to guide its focus on a range of catchment related matters. This broad consultation across environmental, social and water matters enabled a holistic approach to understanding and managing the region's catchment that continues to face pressure of increased water demand every year.

The priorities for the Coordination Group in 2024-25 include activities to strengthen catchment management and planning in the ACT and the Region.

Notable activities that group will focus on include:

- refreshing the ACT and Region Catchment Strategy 2016-2046 to respond to evolving catchment issues
- promoting evidence-based decision making for improved healthy catchments

- promoting actions to securing regional water security for environment and human use
- continuing to support the important work of community-based groups in catchment management
- seeking to establish permanent representation of First Nations people on the Coordination Group.

I thank Dr Cooper and all members of the Coordination Group for their dedication and commitment across the financial year.

I commend the 2023-24 Annual Report for the ACT and Region Catchment Management Coordination Group to the Assembly.