

Goulburn Broken Catchment

The Goulburn Broken Catchment extends north from near the outskirts of Melbourne to the River Murray.

The Catchment's landscapes include seasonally snow-covered alps, forests, granitic outcrops, gentle sloping plains, box woodlands and red gum floodplains.

Two major river basins—the Goulburn and Broken—cover two per cent of the Murray-Darling Basin, or about 10.5 per cent of Victoria. Inflows to the Catchment are 3,559 gigalitres per year, or about 11 per cent of the total annual inflows to the Murray-Darling Basin.

About 205,000 people live in the Catchment. This includes the largest Indigenous population outside Melbourne. The two Registered Aboriginal Parties are Taungurung Clans and Yorta Yorta Nation.

Efforts to protect and improve the Catchment's land, water and biodiversity and people are guided by the Goulburn Broken Regional Catchment Strategy (RCS). The current RCS recognises that the Catchment's communities fall within six broad geographical areas or socio-ecological systems (SEs), which share environmental, economic and social characteristics.

Key characteristics of each of these SEs are:

Agricultural Floodplains

- Landscape highly modified for irrigated agriculture
- Barmah National Park is internationally recognised and an important breeding site for many bird species
- Long history of community leadership in managing land and water problems

Productive Plains

- Predominantly dryland farming
- Many farms remain in the same families for generations
- Landcare and conservation management networks undertake sustainable farming practices and protect threatened species

Commuting hills

- Public and private forests support many plant and animals including the threatened Golden Sun Moth
- Supports a range of agricultural industries and lifestyle communities
- People are drawn to the area by its natural beauty and commute to Melbourne for work

Upland Slopes

- Grazing and other agricultural enterprises occur in cleared valleys
- Lake Eildon provides water for agricultural production, recreation, tourism, and river health all the way down the Catchment and beyond the boundary
- Generational farmers live alongside increasing numbers of lifestyle properties and absentee landholders

Southern Forests

- Mostly public land managed for conservation, but also for recreation and timber production
- Waterways are in good condition with recreation and tourism highly valued
- People live in small and seasonal communities

Urban Centres

- Provide employment, housing and services
- Surrounded by farming and lifestyle properties
- Biodiversity generally poor but remaining vegetation valued for recreation
- Water pumped from rivers for domestic use

