

Rivers, the veins of our Country

Nine case studies of First Nations involvement in managing water for the environment in the Murray-Darling Basin 2022-23

Partnership Agreement between Nari Nari Tribal Council and the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder

A shared vision for environmental watering

Author: Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder staff with consent from Nari Nari Tribal Council.

The Nari Nari Tribal Council (NNTC) and the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder (CEWH) have entered into a ten-year partnership agreement. The partnership agreement formalises a shared vision of supporting and empowering First Nations people to make decisions regarding environmental watering on their Country. The agreement was signed on Nari Nari Country at Toogimbie Station on 20 April 2023.

The Nari Nari people are the Traditional Owners of lands in the lower reaches of the Riverina Region in New South Wales. Nari Nari people have been caring for their Country since time immemorial and hold essential knowledge about how best to care for and restore Country in a way that is culturally appropriate.



Jamie Woods (NNTC Chairperson) and Ian Woods (NNTC Founding Chairperson & Elder) pictured with Simon Banks (CEWH). Photo credit: CEWH

Since 2018, the NNTC and its partners have transformed 19 former Nimmie-Caira properties into the lush wetlands known as Gayini. “Gayini” means “water” in the local language. The Nari Nari people care and protect the wildlife and crucial cultural heritage across the 88,000-hectare area.

The partnership is an important milestone to further empower the NNTC to make decisions on the ongoing cultural and ecological management of their lands according to their lore, custom and knowledge.



Rene woods (NNTC member) pictured with Simon Banks (CEWH) and Hilary Johnson (CEWH). Photo credit: CEWH

The cultural, spiritual, and environmental knowledge of Nari Nari Traditional Owners, combined with CEWH data and mechanisms, will see environmental water delivered to where it can achieve the best possible environmental outcomes.

The ten-year partnership agreement represents an opportunity for the CEWH and NNTC to continue to work together and to demonstrate that First Nations people and their knowledge are valued in environmental water management.



Tara Dixon (NNTC Secretary/ Treasurer) and Jamie Woods (NNTC Chairperson) with Simon Banks (CEWH) and Hilary Johnson (CEWH).

Photo credit: CEWH



Australian Government
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