

LAND & WATER USE MAPPING SUMMARY

GMID¹ 2019/20²

Accompanying fact sheets and full technical report are available at www.gbcma.vic.gov.au

The Goulburn Murray Irrigation District (GMID) is a major irrigation system in Victoria, stretching from Swan Hill to Yarrawonga, including Shepparton and Echuca. The GMID supports a range of agricultural industries such as dairy, cropping, horticulture and grazing.

The GMID land and water use mapping project provides updated land and water use data across the GMID and helps build an understanding of how land and water use is changing in the GMID.

The total irrigable area of the GMID mapped by primary land use as part of this project was 842,542ha. Cropping and Dairy (Combined)³ (i.e. Dairy, Dairy Associated, and Dairy Agistment and Fodder) remained the two most extensive land uses in the GMID in 2019/20, accounting for 42% and 26.5% of the primary land use, respectively.

Dairy (Combined) continued to be a dominant land use in the GMID, despite the area (ha) associated with active dairy sheds reducing approximately 7-8% per annum between 2015/16 and 2019/20. This data represents dairying activity at a point in time and does not necessarily reflect formal exits from the industry. Nonetheless, this reduction was indicative of dairy industry adjustment to changing water availability and market conditions.

Cropping increased by 97,689ha between 2015/16 and 2019/20 and had the largest extent of land use in the GMID, accounting for 355,835ha. This increase was due in part to the reclassification of the 'Mixed Farming and Grazing' category in 2019/20 into primary and secondary land uses, which saw a large segment reclassified as Cropping.

Rural Lifestyle/Residential land use increased 18,632ha (65%) since 2015/16 suggesting broader socio-economic changes in irrigation communities, such as farms transitioning to lifestyle properties. Overall, Perennial and Annual Horticulture remain relatively stable in terms of land use area.

Of the 14,401 water use licences across the GMID, most were attributed to Rural Residential/Lifestyle (6,905), Cropping (2,769) and Dairy (Combined) (1,940).

The 2019/20 season followed successive years of low inflow into Murray and Goulburn storages. While dry conditions in northern Victoria eased with early autumn rain in 2020, the 2019/20 season saw very low allocation on the Murray and Goulburn systems. This resulted in very low water use in the GMID in 2019/20 (513GL), compared with 2018/19 (1,074GL) and 2015/16 (1,003GL).

In 2019/20, Dairy (Combined) was the largest water user across the GMID, using 220GL (43% of total water use), followed by Cropping using 109GL (21% of total water use).

1. The project area is referred to collectively as the Goulburn Murray Irrigation District (GMID), which includes the GMID (including Woorinen), Tresco and Nyah Irrigation Districts.

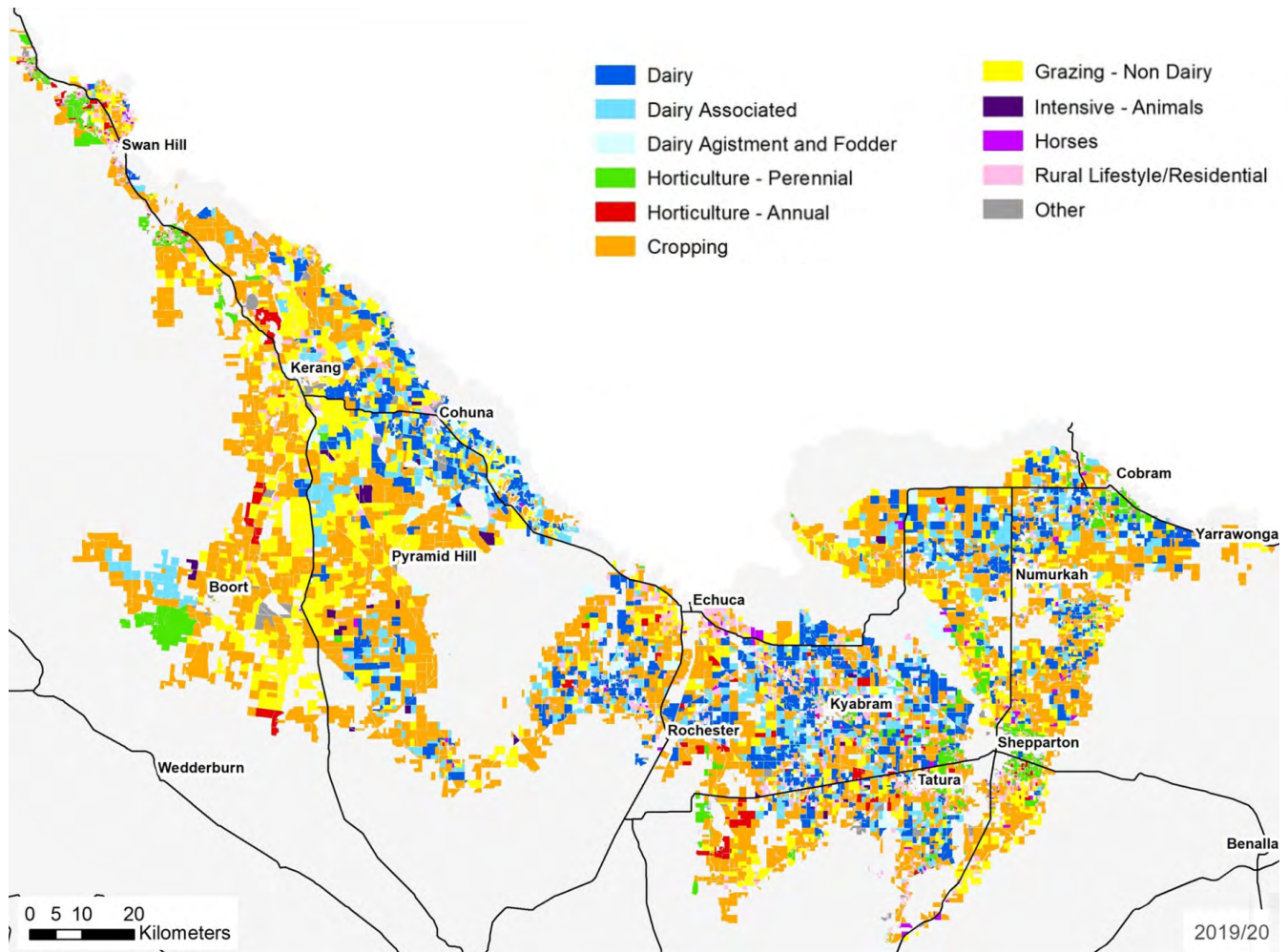
2. 2019/20 data is reflective of activity at the point of survey and based on the 2019/20 irrigation season (August 2019 to May 2020).

3. Dairy Combined includes all of the dairy land use categories including 'Dairy' (WUL with an active milking shed), 'Dairy Associated' (land linked to an active dairy shed WUL) and 'Dairy Agistment and Fodder' (no clear link to an active milking shed but dairy cattle present or a former active dairy farm that may be in transition).

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Goulburn Murray Irrigation District (GMID) 2019/20 Land and Water Use



Primary Land Use	Water Use licences	Area (ha)	Water Use (GL)
Dairy	714	109,658	155
Dairy Associated	821	75,788	40
Dairy Agistment & Fodder	405	38,138	25
Horticulture - Perennial	798	31,620	75
Horticulture - Annual	134	12,867	13
Cropping	2,769	355,835	110

Primary Land Use	Water Use licences	Area (ha)	Water Use (GL)
Grazing Non-Dairy	1,301	150,026	61
Intensive Animals	39	4,735	2
Horses	172	5,505	3
Rural Lifestyle/Residential	6,905	47,163	23
Other ⁴	343	11,208	5
Total	14,401	842,542	513

4. 'Other' refers to a miscellaneous grouping including municipal infrastructure i.e. sporting ovals and schools.

This project is delivered and funded by partnerships between Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, Agriculture Victoria, Goulburn Broken and North Central Catchment Management Authorities, Goulburn Murray Water, Murray Dairy and HMC Property Group. These organisations do not guarantee that the publication is without flaw of any kind or is wholly appropriate for your particular purpose and therefore disclaim all liability for error, loss or other consequence which may arise from relying on this publication's information.