

Murray and Sunraysia – Algae Alert Status

19 February 2026

This Blue-green algal (BGA) alert report is based on routine monitoring at sites in the Murray & Sunraysia Algae Reporting Area. The sites are monitored by WaterNSW and local water authorities. Satellite imagery may be used to supplement the monitoring data.

Please see Table 1 for all red, amber and green alerts.

Red Alerts

- Lake Menindee Site 19
- Lake Menindee Outlet Regulator
- Silver City Highway

Amber Alerts

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lake Hume at Heywoods Bay near Bethanga• Lake Hume Dam Resort• Lake Hume Dam Wall• Murray River at Union Bridge in Albury• Mulwala Canal Offtake• Murray River below Yarrawonga• Murray River at Cobram• Murray River at Tocumwal• Murray River at Picnic Point• Murray River at Moama• Murray River at Barham• Murray River at Tooleybuc• Murray River at Euston• Murray River at Mount Dispersion• Murray River at Curlwaa | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Murray River at Fort Courage• Murray River Lock 8• Gulpa Creek at Mathoura• Edward River at Deniliquin• Edward River at Old Morago• Darling River at Wilcannia• Lake Wetherell Sites 1, 2 & 3• Lake Pamamaroo Outlet• Lake Copi Hollow• Darling River at upstream Weir 32• Darling River at Tolarno• Darling River at Burtundy• Darling River at Ellerslie• Darling River at Tapio |
|--|---|

Climate Outlooks

For March to May, rainfall is likely to be below average across the regions. The drier than average forecast signal generally increases in extent and likelihood as Autumn progresses. Maximum temperatures are very likely to be above average (over 80% chance) and minimum temperatures are likely to exceed the average. (Source: [Bureau of Meteorology \(BoM\)](#))

Algal Outlook

The risk for blue-green algal growth continues to be high with increased algal activity very likely where flow conditions are low or waters are shallow.

Satellite image observations start on page 4 of this report.

Table 1: Combined Murray and Sunraysia Alerts.

| Site | Description | Latest Sample Date | Cyanobacteria Total Count (cells/mL) | Cyanobacteria Biovolume (mm ³ /L) | Potentially Toxic Cyanobacterial Count (cells/mL) | Potentially Toxic Cyanobacterial Biovolume (mm ³ /L) | Current Status (based on Latest Sample) | Previous Status | Cyanobacteria dominant potentially toxic taxa | Cyanobacteria Comments |
|----------------------------|---|--------------------|--------------------------------------|--|---|---|---|-----------------|---|----------------------------------|
| MURRAY RIVER SYSTEM | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Corryong Supply - Raw Water Inlet to Corryong TP (NE Water) | 9/02/2026 | <33100 | <0.17597 | 0 | 0.000 | GREEN | AMBER | | |
| | Manus Lake (SVC) Lake pontoon | 27/01/2026 | 1,563 | 0.003 | 0 | 0.000 | No Alert | GREEN | | |
| DLH003 | Lake Hume, Ebden | 2/02/2026 | 14,136 | 0.303 | 119 | 0.003 | GREEN | AMBER | <i>Microcystis sp.</i> | Potentially toxic, taste & odour |
| DLH001 | Lake Hume, Heywoods Bay nr Bethanga | 2/02/2026 | 31,037 | 0.425 | 221 | 0.026 | AMBER | AMBER | <i>Dolichospermum sp.</i> | Potentially toxic, taste & odour |
| DLH002 | Lake Hume, Hume Dam Resort | 2/02/2026 | 11,977 | 0.098 | 599 | 0.016 | AMBER | AMBER | <i>Microcystis sp.</i> | Potentially toxic, taste & odour |
| DLH004 | Lake Hume, Dam Wall | 2/02/2026 | 18,842 | 0.746 | 490 | 0.013 | AMBER | AMBER | <i>Microcystis sp.</i> | Potentially toxic, taste & odour |
| N1000 | Murray R. Union Bridge Albury | 4/02/2026 | 40,550 | 0.604 | 898 | 0.021 | AMBER | GREEN | <i>Microcystis sp.</i> | Potentially toxic, taste & odour |
| N1001 | Murray R. Corowa | 4/02/2026 | 16,041 | 0.184 | 408 | 0.009 | GREEN | GREEN | <i>Microcystis sp.</i> | Potentially toxic, taste & odour |
| | Yarrowonga Weir (outlet) GMW | 3/02/2026 | 62,948 | 2.733 | 11100 | 2.305 | AMBER | AMBER | <i>Dolichospermum cf. crassum</i> | |
| N1008 | Mulwala Canal Offtake | 4/02/2026 | 52,678 | 2.478 | 204 | 0.022 | AMBER | AMBER | <i>Dolichospermum sp.</i> | Potentially toxic, taste & odour |
| N1007 | Murray R. @ below Yarrowonga | 4/02/2026 | 85,664 | 2.278 | 3,295 | 0.217 | AMBER | AMBER | <i>Dolichospermum sp.</i> | Potentially toxic, taste & odour |
| N1051 | Murray R. Cobram (Barooga) | 4/02/2026 | 93,985 | 2.671 | 1,323 | 0.057 | AMBER | AMBER | <i>Microcystis sp.</i> | Potentially toxic, taste & odour |
| | Cobram WTP, raw water (GVW) | 29/01/2026 | 30,204 | 2.295 | 904 | 0.150 | AMBER | AMBER | <i>Dolichospermum - coiled (≥6µm)</i> | |
| N1013 | Murray R. Tocumwal | 4/02/2026 | 103,872 | 6.166 | 1,667 | 0.113 | AMBER | AMBER | <i>Dolichospermum sp.</i> | Potentially toxic, taste & odour |
| N1052 | Murray R. Picnic Point | 2/02/2026 | 89,642 | 6.020 | 1,534 | 0.052 | AMBER | AMBER | <i>Microcystis sp.</i> | Potentially toxic, taste & odour |
| | Barmah WTP raw water (GVW) | 29/01/2026 | 344,832 | 3.466 | 1792 | 0.247 | AMBER | AMBER | <i>Dolichospermum cf. circinale</i> | |
| N1050 | Murray R. Moama (Echuca) | 2/02/2026 | 166,393 | 3.032 | 1,953 | 0.172 | AMBER | AMBER | <i>Aphanizomenonaceae sp.</i> | Potentially toxic, taste & odour |
| | Torrumbarry Weir GMW | 2/02/2026 | 78,472 | 1.367 | 1358 | 0.359 | AMBER | AMBER | <i>Dolichospermum cf. crassum</i> | |
| N1003 | Murray R. Barham (Koondrook) | 3/02/2026 | 85,470 | 1.071 | 1,290 | 0.107 | AMBER | AMBER | <i>Dolichospermum sp.</i> | Potentially toxic, taste & odour |
| N1054 | Murray R. Murray Downs (Swan Hill) | 3/02/2026 | 77,062 | 0.349 | 347 | 0.008 | GREEN | AMBER | <i>Microcystis sp.</i> | Potentially toxic, taste & odour |
| | Murray River U/S Woorinen pumps GMW | 9/02/2026 | 100,550 | 0.600 | 350 | 0.030 | AMBER | AMBER | <i>Aphanizomenonaceae family – straight</i> | |
| N1055 | Murray R. Tooleybuc (Piangil) | 3/02/2026 | 85,182 | 4.359 | 0 | 0.000 | AMBER | AMBER | | |
| N1064 | Lake Benanee Rec Area | 4/02/2026 | 42,053 | 0.061 | 0 | 0.000 | GREEN | GREEN | | |
| N1028 | Murray R. Euston (Robinvale) | 3/02/2026 | 30,793 | 1.118 | 0 | 0.000 | AMBER | AMBER | | |
| N1065 | Murray R. Mount Dispersion | 4/02/2026 | 174,587 | 1.052 | 1,905 | 0.046 | AMBER | GREEN | <i>Microcystis sp.</i> | Potentially toxic, taste & odour |
| N1062 | Murray R. Buronga | 3/02/2026 | 47,714 | 0.130 | 153 | 0.018 | GREEN | GREEN | <i>Aphanizomenonaceae sp.</i> | Potentially toxic, taste & odour |
| | Merbein (LMW) | 27/01/2026 | 44,878 | 0.472 | 550 | 0.041 | AMBER | AMBER | <i>Microcystis sp.</i> | |
| N1027 | 414206 - Murray River at Merbein | 3/02/2026 | 39,845 | 0.236 | 510 | 0.012 | GREEN | GREEN | <i>Microcystis sp.</i> | Potentially toxic, taste & odour |
| N1063 | Murray R. Curlwaa | 2/02/2026 | 68,533 | 0.429 | 1,102 | 0.026 | AMBER | AMBER | <i>Microcystis sp.</i> | Potentially toxic, taste & odour |
| N1066 | Murray R. Fort Courage | 2/02/2026 | 119,453 | 0.612 | 442 | 0.049 | AMBER | GREEN | <i>Dolichospermum sp.</i> | Potentially toxic, taste & odour |
| | Lock 9 (LMW) | 27/01/2026 | 41,550 | 0.543 | 3784 | 0.261 | AMBER | AMBER | <i>Aphanizomenonaceae family - coiled (<6µm)</i> | |
| N1077 | Murray R. Lock 8 | 2/02/2026 | 110,945 | 5.272 | 2,654 | 0.333 | AMBER | GREEN | <i>Anabaenopsis sp.</i> | Potentially toxic |
| N1078 | Lake Victoria Outlet Regulator | 2/02/2026 | 7,608 | 0.211 | 1,020 | 0.123 | GREEN | No Alert | <i>Dolichospermum sp.</i> | Potentially toxic, taste & odour |

Table 1: Continued

| Site | Description | Latest Sample Date | Cyanobacteria Total Count (cells/mL) | Cyanobacteria Biovolume (mm ³ /L) | Potentially Toxic Cyanobacterial Count (cells/mL) | Potentially Toxic Cyanobacterial Biovolume (mm ³ /L) | Current Status (based on Latest Sample) | Previous Status | Cyanobacteria dominant potentially toxic taxa | Cyanobacteria Comments |
|---|-------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------|--|---|---|---|-----------------|--|----------------------------------|
| BILLBONG CREEK, EDWARD & WAKOOL RIVERS | | | | | | | | | | |
| N1020 | Billabong Ck. Walbundrie | 4/02/2026 | 58,378 | 0.119 | 0 | 0.000 | GREEN | GREEN | | |
| N1015 | Billabong Ck. Jerilderie | 2/02/2026 | 2,389 | 0.001 | 0 | 0.000 | No Alert | No Alert | | |
| N1006 | Gulpa Ck. Mathoura | 2/02/2026 | 111,404 | 4.007 | 1,422 | 0.072 | AMBER | AMBER | <i>Microcystis sp.</i> | Potentially toxic, taste & odour |
| N1002 | Edward R Deniliquin | 2/02/2026 | 82,768 | 3.512 | 748 | 0.046 | AMBER | AMBER | <i>Microcystis sp.</i> | Potentially toxic, taste & odour |
| N1053 | Edward R. Old Morago | 3/02/2026 | 151,616 | 1.993 | 544 | 0.044 | AMBER | AMBER | <i>Aphanizomenonaceae sp.</i> | Potentially toxic, taste & odour |
| N1005 | Edward R. Moulamein | 3/02/2026 | 102,578 | 0.204 | 408 | 0.009 | GREEN | AMBER | <i>Microcystis sp.</i> | Potentially toxic, taste & odour |
| N1010 | Wakool R. Wakool-Barham Road | 3/02/2026 | 42,706 | 0.056 | 0 | 0.000 | GREEN | GREEN | | |
| N1004 | Wakool R. @ Stoney Crossing | 3/02/2026 | 4,083 | 0.004 | 0 | 0.000 | No Alert | No Alert | | |
| N1009 | Wakool R. Kyalite | 3/02/2026 | 58,534 | 0.091 | 0 | 0.000 | GREEN | No Alert | | |
| MENINDEE LAKE SYSTEM & LOWER DARLING RIVER | | | | | | | | | | |
| N1042 | Darling River at Wilcannia | 3/02/2026 | 633,196 | 1.604 | 9,252 | 0.340 | AMBER | AMBER | <i>Microcystis sp.</i> | Potentially toxic, taste & odour |
| N1087 | Lake Wetherell Site 1 | 21/01/2026 | 298,563 | 1.072 | 3,757 | 0.463 | AMBER | GREEN | <i>Anabaenopsis sp.</i> | Potentially toxic |
| N1088 | Lake Wetherell Site 2 | 21/01/2026 | 145,220 | 1.657 | 8,353 | 0.990 | AMBER | No Alert | <i>Dolichospermum sp.</i> | Potentially toxic, taste & odour |
| N1089 | Lake Wetherell Site 3 | 21/01/2026 | 385,480 | 1.462 | 5,894 | 0.712 | AMBER | GREEN | <i>Dolichospermum sp.</i> | Potentially toxic, taste & odour |
| N1090 | Lake Wetherell Site 4 | 21/01/2026 | 25,881 | 0.133 | 0 | 0.000 | GREEN | GREEN | | |
| N1091 | Lake Tandure Site 8 | 21/01/2026 | 163,325 | 0.274 | 408 | 0.051 | GREEN | No Alert | <i>Anabaenopsis sp.</i> | Potentially toxic |
| N1092 | Lake Pamamaroo Inlet (Site 9) | 21/01/2026 | 277,520 | 0.350 | 0 | 0.000 | GREEN | GREEN | | |
| N1129 | 42510013 Centre Pamamaroo (Site 13) | 22/01/2026 | 98,408 | 0.143 | 0 | 0.000 | GREEN | No Alert | | |
| N1093 | Lake Pamamaroo Outlet (Site 10) | 21/01/2026 | 418,076 | 0.528 | 0 | 0.000 | AMBER | No Alert | | |
| N1094 | Menindee Lakes, Copi Hollow | 22/01/2026 | 311,161 | 0.451 | 0 | 0.000 | AMBER | GREEN | | |
| N1130 | Lake Menindee Site 19 | | | | | | RED | RED | <i>Red Alert raised based on satellite imagery since 8/01/2026. Site has not been sampled due to being inaccessible.</i> | |
| N1339 | Lake Menindee outlet regulator | 9/02/2026 | 1,244,535 | 12.842 | 44,620 | 5.483 | RED | RED | <i>Aphanizomenonaceae sp.</i> | Potentially toxic, taste & odour |
| N1095 | Darling R. Menindee bhwb pump | 22/01/2026 | 19,869 | 0.052 | 0 | 0.000 | GREEN | No Alert | | |
| N1086 | Darling R u/s Weir 32 | 9/02/2026 | 520,928 | 4.025 | 4,628 | 0.595 | AMBER | AMBER | <i>Anabaenopsis sp.</i> | Potentially toxic |
| N1043 | Darling R. Tolarno | 3/02/2026 | 393,192 | 3.360 | 3,497 | 0.461 | AMBER | AMBER | <i>Anabaenopsis sp.</i> | Potentially toxic |
| N1040 | Darling R. Pooncarie | 3/02/2026 | 45,125 | 0.215 | 1,152 | 0.128 | GREEN | AMBER | <i>Dolichospermum sp.</i> | Potentially toxic, taste & odour |
| N1041 | Darling R. Burtundy | 3/02/2026 | 171,266 | 0.675 | 1,633 | 0.182 | AMBER | AMBER | <i>Dolichospermum sp.</i> | Potentially toxic, taste & odour |
| N1074 | Darling R. Ellerslie | 2/02/2026 | 515,482 | 1.341 | 1,772 | 0.197 | AMBER | AMBER | <i>Dolichospermum sp.</i> | Potentially toxic, taste & odour |
| N1075 | Darling R. Tapio | 2/02/2026 | 122,739 | 0.460 | 0 | 0.000 | AMBER | AMBER | | |
| GREAT DARLING ANABRANCH | | | | | | | | | | |
| N1350 | Silver City Hwy | 3/02/2026 | 3,318,669 | 91.839 | 111,023 | 8.102 | RED | RED | <i>Raphidiopsis raciborskii</i> | Potentially toxic, taste & odour |

Satellite imagery

The key to the approximate total algae (blue green and non-blue green) concentrations using the Custom Algae Script can be found in Table 3. The actual values can potentially vary by a significant margin due to the geology of the waterbody, species of algae, turbidity, aquatic plants, time of day of the image capture, aerosols in the atmosphere, etc. This variability is a result of the nature of satellite imagery being a large-scale remote sensing format and is not function of the technology or the script itself. For this reason, these colours and descriptors are not the official “Algae Alert Level” but rather provides information on the **potential risk on algae formation**.

Table 3: Observed risk levels based on the estimated photosynthetic activity for Custom Algae Script

| Map Colour | Risk Level - | Starting concentration guide range | RACC recreational alert values approx. equivalence |
|------------|--------------|------------------------------------|--|
| Blue | Very low | <0.05 mm ³ /L | No Alert |
| Green | Low | 0.05 to 0.5 mm ³ /L | Green |
| Yellow | Medium | 0.5 to 5.0 mm ³ /L | Amber |
| Red | High | 5.0 to 20.0 mm ³ /L | Red |
| Dark red | Extreme | > 20 mm ³ /L | Red |

Observations about the satellite images

Figure 1 indicates that Hume Dam had mostly very low-level phytoplankton activity on the 10th of February.

The satellite images from the 16th of February (Figure 2) shows mostly medium levels were indicated across Menindee Lake and high at Cawndilla Creek. Lake Cawndilla has shown further increases with low activity across more of the lake, and medium levels at the inflow of Cawndilla Creek. Mostly low levels were indicated at Weir 32 and mostly very low at Lakes Tandure, Pamamaroo, Copi Hollow and Wetherell (sites 3 and 4).

On the 16th of February, the Murray River near Wentworth indicated mostly very low levels of phytoplankton activity and the Darling River indicated mostly low levels (Figure 3).

Lake Victoria showed mostly very low phytoplankton activity on the 16th of February (Figure 4).

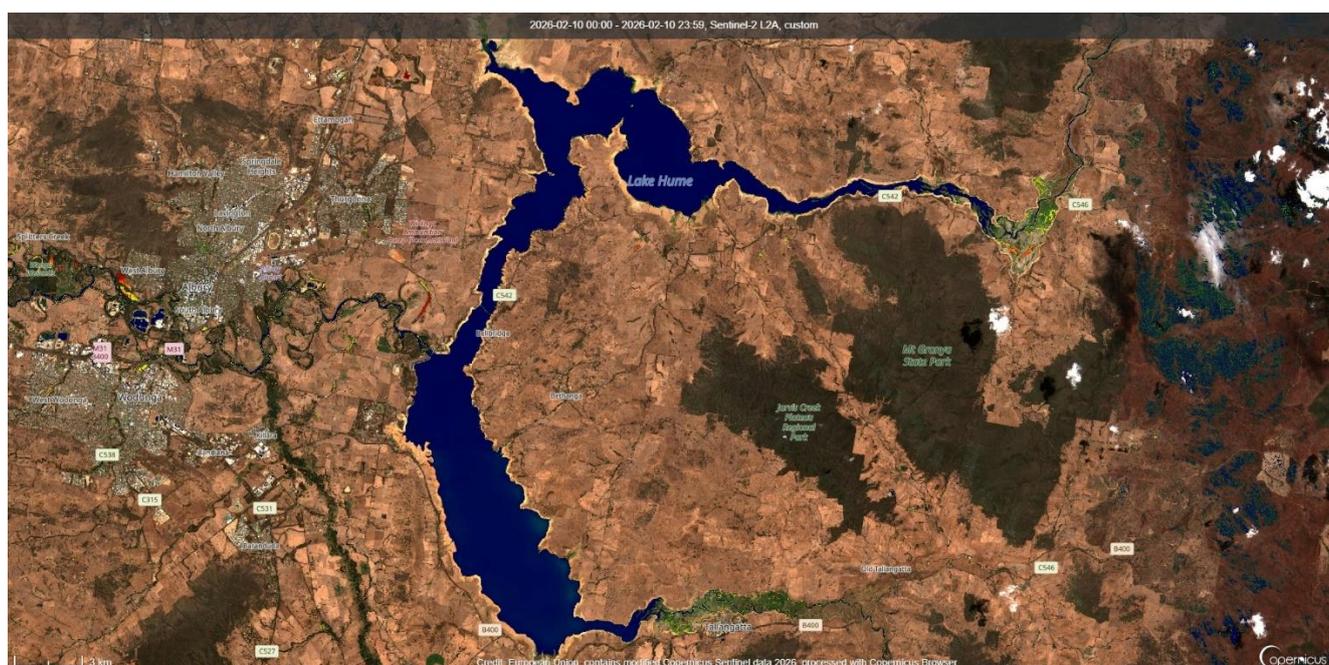


Figure 1: Hume Dam 10/02/2026 SentinelHub [CC BY-NC 4.0] NSW- RACC Custom Algae Script - TF, WaterNSW.

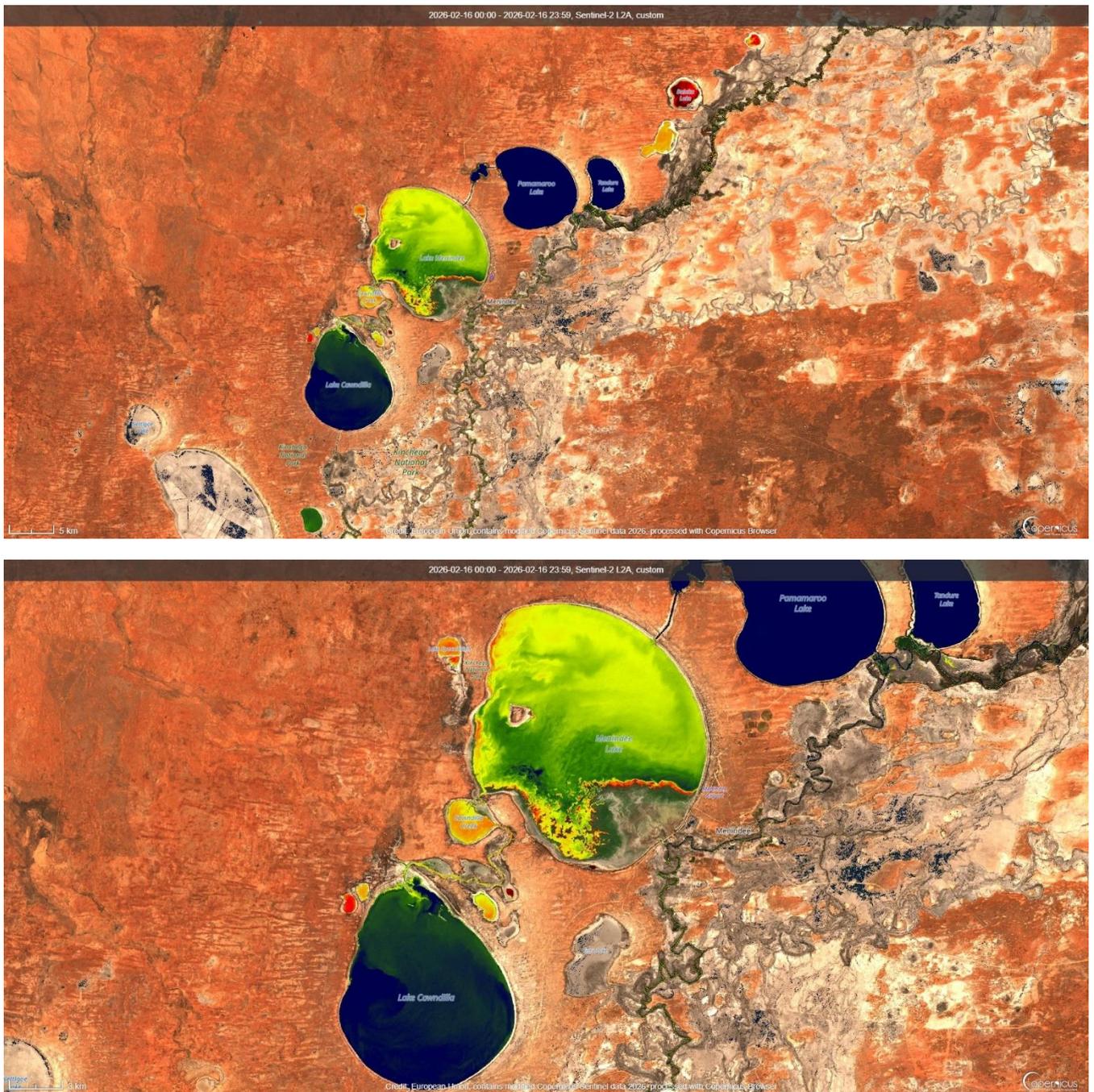


Figure 2: Menindee Lakes 16/02/2026 SentinelHub [CC BY-NC 4.0] NSW-RACC Custom Algae Script - TF, WaterNSW.



Figure 3: Murray River near Wentworth, Lower Darling River and Great Darling Anabranch 16/02/2026 SentinelHub [CC BY-NC 4.0] NSW- RACC Custom Algae Script - TF, WaterNSW.



Figure 4: Lake Victoria 16/02/2026 SentinelHub [CC BY-NC 4.0] NSW- RACC Custom Algae Script - TF, WaterNSW.

Alert Definitions for Recreational Waters

Alert Definitions as specified in The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) *Guidelines for Managing Risks in Recreational Water* 2008.

The interim use of these guidelines is endorsed by the Scientific Subcommittee of the NSW Algal Advisory Group.

RED ALERT

These alert levels represent 'bloom' conditions. Water will appear green or discoloured and clumps or scums could be visible. It can also give off a strong musty or organic odour.

Algae may be toxic to humans and animals. Contact with or use of water from red alert areas should be avoided due to the risk of eye and skin irritation. Drinking untreated or boiled water from these supplies can cause stomach upsets. Alternative water supplies should be sought or activated carbon treatment employed to remove toxins. People should not fish when an algal scum is present. Owners should keep dogs away from high alert areas and provide alternative watering points for stock.

AMBER ALERT

Blue-green algae may be multiplying, and the water may have a green tinge and musty or organic taste and odour. The water should be considered as unsuitable for potable use and alternative supplies or prior treatment of raw water for domestic purposes should be considered. The water may also be unsuitable for stock watering. Generally suitable for water sports, however people are advised to exercise caution in these areas, as blue-green algal concentrations can rise to red alert levels quickly under warm, calm weather conditions.

GREEN ALERT

Blue-green algae occur naturally at low numbers. At these concentrations, algae would not normally be visible, however some species may affect taste and odour of water even at low numbers and does not pose any problems for recreational, stock or household use.

Key to Alerts for Recreational Waters

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>RED Alert $\geq 50\ 000$ cells/mL toxic <i>M. aeruginosa</i> OR biovolume equivalent of ≥ 4 mm³/L for the combined total of all cyanobacteria where a known toxin producer is dominant in the total biovolume OR The total biovolume of all cyanobacteria ≥ 10 mm³/L OR Cyanobacterial scums are consistently present</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High levels of Blue Green Algae detected • Indicates "bloom" conditions • Toxicity should be presumed • Water will appear green or brownish and may have a strong musty taste and odour • Surface scums could occur • Extreme care should be exercised, and contact with the water should be avoided <p>Action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue Media Release • Water supply authorities to increase filtering with activated carbon as appropriate • Local authority and health authorities to warn the public that the water body is unsuitable for primary contact recreation |
| <p>AMBER Alert $\geq 5\ 000$ to $< 50\ 000$ cells/mL <i>M. aeruginosa</i> OR biovolume equivalent of ≥ 0.4 to < 4 mm³/L for the combined total of all cyanobacteria where known toxin producers are dominant in the total biovolume OR ≥ 0.4 to < 10mm³/L combined total for all blue-green algae where known toxin producers are not dominant</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicates blue-green algae are multiplying • Water may have a green tinge and musty taste and odour <p>Action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water supply authorities to consider filtering with activated carbon • Investigations into the causes of the elevated levels and increased sampling to enable the risks to recreational users to be more accurately assessed. |

GREEN Alert

> 500 to < 5 000 cells/mL *M. aeruginosa*
OR
biovolume equivalent of > 0.04 to < 0.4
mm³/L for the combined total of all
cyanobacteria

- Low levels of potentially toxic species detected – suggesting base crop of blue green algae may be on the increase

Action

- Continue/increase routine sampling to measure cyanobacterial levels

Livestock Drinking Water Guidelines Based on ARMCANZ (2000), Orr and Schneider (2006) and WQRA (2010)

This guideline should be used when water is used for livestock drinking water purposes.

- If visual scums are present, then a High alert should be declared. This would be applicable for both farm dams and publicly managed water bodies (streams, rivers, etc). Such advice should also be given to farmers who phone the department seeking information on managing blooms in their dams.
- Where blooms dominated by *Microcystis aeruginosa* are present, then the ANZECC/ARMCANZ (2000) guideline of 11,500 cells/mL should be used. Excess of this cell count will constitute a **High alert**.
- Where blooms dominated by *Dolichospermum circinale* are present, then the Orr and Schneider (2006) guideline of 25,000 cells/mL should be used. Excess of this cell count will constitute a **High alert**.
- **Blooms of blue-green algae other** than *M. aeruginosa* and *D. circinale* are also common in NSW. These can be of either known potentially toxic species, or of species not considered to be toxin producers. When these blooms are present, a total blue-green algal biovolume in excess of 6 mm³/L will constitute a **High alert**. (These are based on Very High alert recommendations for raw water sourced for potable human supply published by WQRA (2010), in lieu of there being nothing else available).

Further Information and Contacts

Links to websites of VIC and other agencies

[Link to Snowy Valleys Council](#)

[Link to North East Water](#)

[Link to Goulburn-Murray Water blue-green algal alerts](#)

[Link to Goulburn Valley Water blue-green algal information](#)

[Link to Lower Murray Water blue-green algal alerts](#)

[NSW DPI blue-green-algae information for landholders](#)

Manus Lake, at the Pontoon – [Snowy Valley Council](#)

Go to the WaterNSW Algal Website

www.waternsw.com.au/algae or at WaterInsights (links below):

Murray regulated river – <https://waterinsights.waternsw.com.au/11904-new-south-wales-murray-regulated-river/updates>

Lower-Darling regulated river – <https://waterinsights.waternsw.com.au/12104-lower-darling-regulated-river/updates>

Contacts

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