

Committee Secretary  
Senate Standing References Committee on Rural Affairs and Transport  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT Australia

Chairman  
Murray Darling Basin Authority  
Canberra ACT Australia

17th December 2010

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

The following is my submission concerning a future strategy with regard to water allocations within the Murray Darling Basin. We ask that the submission not be published but that the data be utilised in the context of assessing the impacts of socio-economics on Basin communities and especially on second and third generation farmers that have invested their life and resources in making rural Australia effective and efficient.

1 I ask that no further cuts on irrigation waters to irrigation farmers become a reality - after nigh on 10 years of drought, trying to make a living from farming is difficult enough AND are we all not entitled to follow our dream and hopefully make a reasonable living to look after our families? Farming and environmental allocations are based on water availability in the dams in any one year and the farming community accepts this - we are reliant on 'mother nature'. Australia's climate has from the days of settlement allowed for the rivers to 'run dry' on a number of occasions and whilst we all want a healthy river and environmental system, we cannot and should not continually target the farming community - we, after all, do produce the food that all Australians consume! Mind you, the comments and letters in the media from city-dwellers leaves one wondering where they think their food comes from. The amount of imported produce on the supermarket shelves is a concern for Australian communities with regard 'quality control' issues - maybe, our city folk don't have an issue where food comes from -

2 We need more dams built - the waste of water over the past few months of excessively heavy rainfall is a disgrace - allowed to run out to sea! Why have governments sat back for a lot of years and not planned infrastructures - why now blame and penalise the farming sector for their water use. I would suggest that Australian farmers in 2010 are some of the most efficient users of water ever. Dams built for the sole purpose of 'environmental' storage! Why not?

3 The MIA was set-up as an 'irrigation' venture that has prospered and grown - the wonderful multi-cultural mix that has allowed communities such as Griffith and Leeton to expand is exciting. We are good at what we do here in the MIA - (vineyards, rice, wheat, animal production and fruit) and I ask that you do not destroy these communities by making decisions that will devastate them.

4 If the environment is suffering (and we know that during a 10 year period of drought that does happen) why have governments over the past years allowed for water to extend beyond the boundaries for which 'irrigation schemes' were designed?

5 Tourism is a leader world-wide in providing communities with wealth to expand and grow and without our 'food production' tourism will become obsolete. I feel it is time for 'elected' governments to work with the people and not against them - sit down and LISTEN to our concerns and what we have to say!

If I can contribute further please advise at your convenience.

Yours sincerely

Darren J Ciavarella