

Submission No 136



## Form Submission

Submitted values are:

**email subject**

At least 4,000GL for our rivers

**email message**

Dear The Hon Tony Burke, Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities, The Hon Simon Crean, Minister for Regional Development, Mr Mike Taylor, Chair MDBA, Mr Rob Freeman, CEO MDBA, Mr Tony Windsor, MP, Victorian Premier John Brumby, Victorian Water Minister Tim Holding, Victorian Opposition Leader Ted Baillieu; I applaud the work the Commonwealth and the Murray Darling Basin Authority have begun to restore the Murray-Darling Basin to health. The Guide to the Basin Plan is a good start, but is already a compromise for the environment. Returning anything less than 4,000 billion litres of water to the environment risks the health of the Basin, and the long-term prosperity of the communities that rely on it. To properly ascertain what the real environmental and socio-economic impacts of various sustainable diversion limits will be, the MDBA and Commonwealth government must consider the costs of not taking action to restore the Basin to environmental health. This work must be supported by recommendations about how governments can assist irrigation communities transition to a sustainable future using less water – a future of dryland farming, growing trees to sequester carbon, eco-tourism and of course efficient irrigation. I therefore urge the Authority to assess the full costs and benefits of returning between 3,000 and 7,600 billion litres of water to the Murray-Darling system, and consider and recommend how to transition the Basin to a sustainable footing. Further, I call on the Victorian state government to work co-operatively with the MDBA and the Commonwealth to ensure our iconic River Red Gum parks and other environmental assets within the basin are allocated a fair share of total available water. I call on you as leaders during this important time to give the rivers systems a fighting chance by holding firm for our environment. The Basin Plan must provide at least 4,000 GL to rivers and wetlands to secure their future and the future of the communities that depend on them. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to resuscitate the Basin. We cannot afford to miss it. Yours sincerely,

**your first name**

Sarah

**your surname**

Dobney