

The “TUCKETT SOLUTION” to a sustainable Murray-Darling Basin

I submit that the solution to the Murray Darling Valley debate is dependent primarily on **cleverness and timing. Cleverness of those contributing to the debate and of their probable solution and equally important the cleverness of timing of their application for the appropriate strategy being extremely vital.**

The science supporting the methodologies of those proposing solutions shall be scrutinised and challenged. However there must be a balance generated by proposers of such debate and that science shall be appropriately presented. However I consider the relevance and meaningfulness of application strategies drawn from that science to be heavily dependent on the **timing of corrective actions**. Damage and negative outcomes caused by 40 to 50 years of excessiveness by State Government outcomes as condoned by Federal and Local Government inaction cannot be corrected by implementing overnight constraints on the farmer, communities and environment that were heavily burdened with these poorly conceived and inappropriate water allocations. Put bluntly 50 years of incompetence in State Government decisions with regard to water allocations cannot and should not be corrected short term by penalising the effective users of water, namely farmers, communities and the environment.

The solution to the current debate on water allocation therefore relates to timing of application rather than whether there needs to be adjustment or not. If the State Governments through their over-allocation in the past 40 years have caused the excess allocation of water for the Murray-Darling Basin, then logically a similar period of adjustment will be required to correct the problem. If Governments have caused the problem through their commercial practise then all levels of government (Federal, State and Local) shall be required to commercially correct the situation. Therefore the balance of responsibility for the problem of over allocation and the reality of acceptable socio-economic outcomes will require the adjustment to occur over a 30 to 40 years. **Typically a gross reduction of 1.5% reduction in water allocation could be applied to all end-users per annum including the farmers, communities and environment achieving progressive adjustment.**

Along with all the above comes accountability. It is not good enough just to schedule such ideas into a strategy. Such ideas if implemented must be totally transparent and must be fully accountable. Were the water allocations by State Governments over the past 40 years fully accountable? If not why not and if favours were found to have been applied should not these non-conforming applications be prosecuted? Are you as an advisory body prepared to state publicly that all such water allocation authorised by various State Governments over the past 40 years were indeed legal and in accordance with due process and law?

If the farmers, communities and environment are to be make the sacrifices necessary to correct the problems caused by inept government then there needs to be a strategy that enables these bodies to assist over an extended period. Governments may not be held accountable in the true commercial sense of the word but current advisors and governments must table solutions that support those that have stood by Australian law, good practices and the common good to support a quality Murray Valley Basin river and environmental system.

If a clever corrective approach was agreed of typically a 1.5% reduction per annum and applied immediately then substantial progress would indeed be achieved by 2020 and targets would be well underway by 2030. This is not the end of the process as indeed if Governments are to artificially provide corrective action then complementary strategies are required to support such targets. The “TUCKETT SOLUTION” has strategic methodologies on how Australia can be a “CLEVER FOOD SUPPLIER” in a total sense and as such would I would welcome the opportunity to address those with the responsibility to advise government on these matters. I note this is a total Australian issue concerning the environment, food supply, security and pricing and community and as such all matters affecting the common good of all Australians.

I offer to provide further comment and input as maybe requested.

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