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Hello Tony,

I write in your capacity as Chair of the Task Force to develop a plan for the MDB (I am unsure of the exact title).

The Water Act 2007 does not mention the Snowy Scheme other than s21(6) which states that the basin Plan cannot be inconsistent with the Snowy Water Licence.

This is in effect the cart driving the horse and I suspect is the shareholding governments way of protecting the generation and derivative trading business of Snowy Hydro Ltd - a government 'cash cow'.

As the Snowy Scheme is a significant contributor to Basin flows - particularly in times of drought - its operation **must** be fully integrated into Basin operations: currently not the case.

It is time that shareholding governments required the Scheme to be managed for its water collection, storage and diversion capabilities and its ability to provide reserve storage in times of drought - the purpose for which it was built - and not primarily as an electricity generator and trader.

I have recently responded to a 'Draft Gippsland Region Sustainability Water Strategy' issued by the Victorian Government; that that summarises my concerns with respect to the Snowy Water Licence and Scheme operation from a water perspective (copy attached). I would also be pleased to assist further should you have any queries.

Whilst the MDB Plan is somewhat of a 'poisoned chalice' I am confident of a satisfactory outcome in your capable hands provided you get the necessary support from governments, oppositions and the myriad of Basin pressure groups. Some of them need to climb out of the trenches and take a cold shower.

With compliments of the season,

Max Talbot