

Submission No: 543.
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Secretary: SC

Dear Sir/Madam,

The Murray Darling Plan cannot properly balance the three areas of social, economic and environmental outcomes as long as the Water Act retains a bias towards the environmental objectives. Therefore, the Water Act needs to be revised and amended. Furthermore, in light of the recent floods throughout much of eastern Australia, the issue of dam construction needs to be reconsidered and the blanket objections by the environmentalist movement towards new dams needs to be ignored.

The communities of the Murray Darling Basin are too important and too dependent upon the river system for a government plan to buy back an unreasonable amount of water, which will have severely negative implications. Taking a disproportionate amount of water away from the irrigators in the basin will reduce the financial viability of many communities and also increase the tendency for people to move to city areas, thereby putting more pressure on urban services, increasing congestion, etc.

I commend the committee for considering ways to make water usage more efficient but I would strongly discourage a response that would be a political capitulation to the extreme environmentalist movement. We all care for the environment and taking water away from irrigators will not necessarily improve the environment and it will almost certainly be to the detriment of food production. Moreover, given the recent deluge that has swept across Queensland, it is time to consider developing the water resources in the north of Australia to cater for our nation's food production and a growing population.

I urge the committee not to make a decision on the MDB that reflects a short-term and short-sighted environmentalist agenda at the expense of the long-term prosperity of our nation and the communities who rely upon the Basin. Contrary to what the extreme environmentalists would have us believe, people and communities whose livelihoods are reliant upon irrigation are the solution and not the problem.

Regards,
Paul McCormack