

The Commonwealth Water Act 2007 .

The Commonwealth Water Act 2007 provides necessary environmental provisions for water to sustain the health of rivers, wetlands and their associated ecosystems.

I strongly support the Water Act 2007 as it stands. It has provisions for a healthy and sustainable environment and these provisions must be retained as the cornerstone of any future plan for the Murray-Darling Basin. I strongly oppose amending the Water Act 2007 if those amendments weaken the environmental provisions. Water extraction has long been the focus of the Basin - at the expense of the environment. The Water Act 2007 recognises the need to return extraction to long-term sustainable levels and to provide water for the environment.

The Water Act 2007 bases decisions about sustainable water extraction levels on the best available science. Basing decisions on a different 'balance' of social and environmental considerations is to ignore the science. This is not in the interests of the environment or the communities utilising the environment. Anything less than sustainable will lead to unhealthy rivers, unhealthy ecosystems and reduce the certainty for communities. The Water Act 2007 has the right balance between irrigation and environmental sustainability and does not need to be amended. I particularly oppose any changes leading to unsustainable water extraction levels.

Gary Hughes (Member of National Parks Association)

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