



**AUSTRALIAN  
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FOUNDATION**

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Committee Secretary  
Senate Legal and Constitutional Committees  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

24 March 2011

Dear Sir

**Submission to the Senate Inquiry into Provisions of the *Water Act 2007***

The view put by some stakeholders that the *Water Act 2007* (the Act) focuses solely on 'environmental' considerations with social and economic considerations sidelined is incorrect. The Act clearly states that the Basin Plan should seek to optimise the human and consumptive uses in the Murray Darling Basin (the Basin), ie that economic and social considerations *must* be taken into account.

The key purpose of the Act is to return water extraction in the Basin to long-term sustainable levels to support ecosystems that depend on the Basin *and* to support continued productive use of the Basin's water resources. The intention of the Act is to achieve a sustainable balance in the Basin, and this purpose and intention inherently involve consideration of environmental, social and economic matters. The Act can achieve a sustainable outcome in the Basin without amendment and the Act quite clearly does not give the environment primacy over all else.

The case in support of the Act being able to optimise social, economic and environmental outcomes without amendment is well made in the attachment to this letter as submitted to the current Inquiry by the Australian Network Environmental Defenders Office (ANEDO).

We fully support and agree with the EDO analysis and request that you accept this letter and the attached EDO submission as representing the view of the Australian Conservation Foundation on this matter.

Yours faithfully

Denise Boyd  
**Campaigns Director**