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MEDIA RELEASE

House of Representatives Standing Committee on the Environment and Energy

Inquiry into the management and use of Commonwealth environmental water

Issue date: 1 March 2018

New inquiry into environmental water

The [House of Representatives Standing Committee on the Environment and Energy](#) has commenced an [inquiry into the management and use of Commonwealth environmental water](#).

The inquiry will examine the role of Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder in determining how environmental water should be used, and also consider how the impact of environmental watering is monitored and evaluated.

The Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder is an independent statutory position established to manage Commonwealth environmental water for the purpose of protecting or restoring environmental assets.

Since its establishment, the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder has become the largest single holder of water entitlements in the Murray-Darling Basin.

The Chair of the Committee, Mr Andrew Broad MP, said the inquiry is an opportunity to understand how environmental water has been managed to date and to identify opportunities to improve the use of environmental water into the future.

“Rivers, floodplains, and wetlands are cornerstones of the Australian environment and support economic activity in regional communities across the country. Environmental water has an important role in ensuring that Australia’s river systems are sustained in the long term,” Mr Broad said.

“In launching this inquiry, the Committee is keen to understand how the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder makes decisions about when and where to use environmental water, and to examine how the water holder taps into local knowledge and uses the latest science in order to achieve genuine long-term environmental outcomes,” Mr Broad said.

“The Committee is not inquiring into the broader Murray–Darling Basin Plan, and we are not looking to duplicate the work already underway in this area. Our focus is on Commonwealth environmental water,” Mr Broad said.

The Deputy Chair of the Committee, Mr Pat Conroy MP, explained the Committee would also seek to ensure that environmental water is used efficiently.

“Commonwealth environmental water holdings represent a significant investment by the Australian public in our natural environment. As part of this inquiry, the Committee will examine the integrity of the management of environmental water and seek to ensure that environmental water is used efficiently and for the purpose for which it was acquired,” Mr Conroy said.



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The Committee will accept written submissions, addressing one or more of the terms of reference, until **Thursday, 12 April 2018**.

Further information about the inquiry, including the terms of reference, is available on the [inquiry webpage](#). Information about how to make a submission to an inquiry can be obtained from the [Parliament of Australia webpage](#).

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