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Hon. Tony Windsor
House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Australia
PO Box 6022
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

To inquiry into the proposed Murray-Darling Basin plan

**Summary of verbal submission at Swan Hill on 30th March 2011
of Murray Darling Basin Draft Plan**

Points Raised:

1/ The failure to have the area consisting of the South Western Victoria and South Eastern South Australia included in the Murray Darling Basin plan as this area has a direct influence on the health of the Coorong water quality. Drainage and diversion banks (Bool Lagoon) have adversely effected the natural flows to the Coorong from Mosquito and Marambo Creeks.

Allocations of ground water licenses in Victoria and South Australia have depleted the aquifer levels, quality and ability to contribute to surface flows.

2/ The desire to sustain the fresh water in Lake Alexandrina and Lake Albert are not sustainable as the evaporation is excessive. The proposed weir at Wellington at the entrance to Lake Alexandrina should be implemented and the construction of a fresh water delivery system constructed to deliver to all lake diverters and towns around both Lake Alexandrina and Lake Albert. The savings from this will reduce the amount of quality water being allocated for the lower lakes and return the system to its original state.

3/ The use of Lake Victoria and the Menindie Lakes as water storages is not sustainable as evaporation again is excessive. A long term strategy to develop deep water storages in the mountains accessible to the upper reaches of our river systems needs to be designed and implemented. (similar to the Snowy Mountain Authority).

4/ The draft plan of the Murray Darling Basin has not properly addressed the influence of ground water extractions on the Basin – the allocations not being used could severely impact on the available water and the present “active” allocations need review to allow the final Basin plan to be fair and equitable to all – irrigators, environment and urban users.

5/ Care must be taken in the terminology of water use efficiencies – modern technologies are excellent in improving water application, however, the most important element is the crop requirement.eg:- (Murray Valley vines 6.3mg/ha ; Rice 11mg/ha; and Almonds 11 to 15mg/ha)

Water delivery is an area of concern as losses can be reduced with improved systems to reduce seepage. (Mulwala canal is run at 10% over design capacity thus increasing losses through seepage).

Should you have any queries please do not hesitate to ring or email me.

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