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Hello Tony.

I am writing this from Albury city on the Murray river.

Firstly, congratulations on becoming the chairman? of the committee looking in to important aspects of our precious Murray- Darling basin system.

I, personally, am aged in my seventies, have travelled widely and seen some of the very biggest rivers in this world of ours. Unfortunately our Australian rivers are only little gutters in comparison- which is all the more reason why we must continue to preserve them and their life giving flows.

I hope many in Australia, on Saturday 10th October watched, as I did, the SBS television Thalassa documentary on the now dead Aral Sea in Kazakhstan.

Before its death it was the 4th biggest lake in the world. The documentary clearly and starkly showed HOW NOT TO allocate irrigation water.

Twenty years ago in 1990 I did a comprehensive tour throughout, what was then, the Soviet Union, and it included a trip to the cities of Tashkent and Bukhara, in Kazakhstan (then a Soviet Union province) both on the (now dead/ dying) Amu Darya river. It and its sister, the northern ( now dead/ dying) Sur Darya river flowed through Kazakhstan and ultimately fed the ( now dead) Aral Sea.

Last century the Soviet Union government, in its misguided wisdom, built dams and weirs on the aforementioned rivers and then proceeded to drain, virtually all of both the rivers' flows to feed the irrigation systems of the huge cotton crops in those areas, thereby destroying the rivers and the Aral Sea.

To further illuminate for you, the stark desert conditions which now exist, because of the Russian Soviet governments errors, can I suggest you advise all the people who attend your meetings, to get on their computers and Google search the Aral Sea and they will see for themselves WHY NOT and HOW NOT to irrigate.

Concerned Australian river lover-- ---  
Ron Deacon.