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| Secretary Basin Plan by the ..... | SC           |

Submission to the Parliamentary enquiry into the Murray Darling Basin Plan by the standing committee on Regional Australia. Looking at the social and economic impacts.

Making long term plans for water allocation during the worst drought and floods for many years is risky and rash. This drought was predicted over fifty years before the event by the well recognised forecaster, Indigo Jones.

Inconsistent water availability in Southern Australia is summed up by Dorothea McKellar much better than I can by her 'droughts and flooding rains.'

A good look at history needs to be undertaken by anyone involved in planning beginning with the letter to the British government in 1840 by Paul Strezlecki, when he and James Macarthur discovered the Snowy Mountains. He predicted "Irrigation will be the measure of agricultural improvement in Australia."

In the 1890's Sir Samuel McCaughey showed the benefit of water at North Yanco and so started the MIA. To inhibit the future growth of such a wonderful vibrant food bowl, let alone jeopardise it's very existence is unacceptable. These people are very inventive. It is recognised that rice is grown around Leeton as efficiently as anywhere in the world a wonderful export for Australia. It is a most adaptable crop and can be varied according to the availability of water.

In wet years the environment receives abundance of flooding etc as it did before white settlement, and surpluses now are stored by dams to retain water for irrigation. I don't believe radical environmentalists have the right to manage the water stored in these dams. The irrigation areas with their permanent plantings and crops are part of the environment, as it has evolved with closer settlement.

In recent times the classification of water into high for permanent plantings and general security for opportunity crops and pastures, has resulted in better management of resources and some certainty for producers.

Issues such as problems in the lower lakes need to be addressed by groups representative of all interested parties such as The Murray Darling Association.

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