



22<sup>nd</sup> November 2010

Dear Hon Sussan Ley MP

Re. Guide to the Draft Murray Darling Basin Plan

I, my wife along with my five children dairy farm close to the town of Finley relying on irrigation water distributed by "Murray Irrigation Limited".

We came to this area in January 2003 having sold our smaller farm in the Dungog area ( coastal area above Sydney ) to our neighbours. Our farm had become unviable after deregulation of the dairy industry. After looking at several options we decided to expand to a bigger operation where traditionally production costs were lower, land costs lower and where there was more opportunity to expand in the future.

Our dream was to have a farm operation that would give at least two of our sons opportunity to farm in the future.

Unfortunately our timing was bad and we walked into what became a extended natural drought. This meant we had to borrow more money and where unable to make capital repayments until this year, which has been a fantastic season with plenty of rain.

In a natural drought there is always hope, a knowledge that the season will change, it will rain again.

After attending the MDBP meeting at Deniliquin I came home to my family with a sad and angry heart and said to my sons "I can't allow any of you to come back to work on the farm, it won't be worth coming back to."

If the Draft Murray Darling Plan is put into action it will in effect remove up to 50% of MIL's water.

On farm this will produce a forever man made drought, a drought where there is no hope, no reason to hang on, no reason to be there. Debt could not be paid back, bankruptcy will be the norm, and farmland will degrade with doubtful benefit to the environment.

Please, please put balance into this plan, produce a plan that will benefit the environment, the economy and the communities we live in. Please take extra time to make this plan a win for all.

As it stands at the moment it is a loss for all with very doubtful benefit to the environment that we do need to protect.

Please take the time to get it right, rushed time frames are dangerous

Yours sincerely with great concern.

David and Christine Milburn along with our family Caleb, Jordan, Isaac, Jeshua and Yoomee