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Reference to Basin Plan

Socio Economic Consequences of the proposed Basin Plan

The MDBA should not ignore the consequences for the Unregulated Section of the Barwon – Darling System from Mungundi to Menindee.

This *valley* already has lost 67% of its allocation (no compensation) under the CAP scheme. It does not have a water sharing plan nor does it have the ability to trade. There is no continuous or carry-over accounting or review of the IQQM (the model on which the entire change was based) as promised. Therefore the trust of the process by irrigators has disappeared.

We are now looking at another possible reduction of 30% of allocation with again probably no compensation.

After all these losses to allocation, I will be back to 800 megs. From the original 2750 megs. This will irrigate approx. 80 HA. only out of the present laid out area of 249 HA.

Therefore I can only use a third of my area for irrigation after spending much capital. The scheme and capital value is shot to pieces

The value of Licences and irrigation properties has been slashed and the sale of them is now non – existent. Business Plans are on hold and opportunities are being squandered because of NO certainty.

Water –Sharing Plan

The plan for the Barwon-Darling System should be given time to run its course before pre-empting that it will NOT deliver on the Environmental Outcomes.

Water Efficiencies

There should be more focus on local stimulus spending. This would have some positive effects for the irrigators involved.

There is a need for modification to the Menindee Lakes as a major imperative.

Model for the End of Valley Flows

The IQQM is the method currently used for modelling diversions but it was never designed for Unregulated Rivers. This can only be applied retrospectively so if any modelling is necessary it should be applied to the Environmental Flows. These should be measured against predicted outcomes. It is not known how much water is used in these flows.

The amount of water used by irrigators is known through meters, pump sizes and storage size.

Interception

The MDBA has used 108 GL. as their figure for stream interception. This is totally wrong for the Mungundi –Menindee System as the River pushes water out onto the flood plain when in Flood and the local rainfall usually does NOT run into the River but into the ground, hollows and gilgais because of the fairly flat landscape.

The NSW Government's Farm Dams Policy does not include the Western Division of NSW in the Act for the above reasons. See 8.9 pg. 109 of the MDBA.

The rest of the state requires 10% of rainfall can be stored on farm but this does not apply to us.

Where is the evidence that there is 108 GLs of interception flows in the Barwon Darling Catchment? See pg. 50. This figure in actual fact should be closer to zero.

Long Term consequences for the Communities

See 7.8 page 98. This explains what will happen to the towns along the Barwon Darling. These outcomes are diametrically opposed to the whole of government commitment, policies and programs aimed at "Bridging the Gap" for aboriginal people who are especially concentrated in Walgett, Brewarrina and Bourke

International Obligations

Wouldn't it be better to have a controlled management of our environment for food and fibre rather than have less production here leading to more imports from third world countries who are no doubt degrading their countries environment in the process?

Outcomes

The current planning regime risks over-regulating environmental water to produce outcomes that do not reflect the natural characteristics of the Basin and in the process destroying Irrigation Businesses that have been founded on a secure share of allocated supply. While environmental systems may rebound quickly following dry periods, rural and regional communities once dislocated will take years to recover and will result in a population shifts, leaving more Socio-Economic problems behind in the towns.

The NSW State Government during the late 1960's and early 1970's was encouraging land holders along the Barwon Darling to take up an irrigation license to Drought Proof their properties IN STARK CONTRAST to the now NSW State Government who has spent the last ten years belting the irrigators with loss of allocations & conditions.

Why didn't the State Government come to the irrigators ten years ago and say there has to be river diversion reductions of 60% over five years, here is \$1000 per green acre to subsidise your efforts. If you do not make it in five years you will lose it. (An Incentive Plan instead)?

Bill Murray

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