

Diane Bell
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The Secretary
Senate Standing Committee on Environment, Communications and the Arts
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Parliament House
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Re: Water Amendment (Saving the Goulburn and Murray Rivers) Bill

I am writing this submission as a concerned citizen who lives on the banks of the Finniss River in South Australia and sees on a daily basis the dramatic changes that are occurring in the Murray-Darling Basin eco-system. I am also a committee member of the River, Lakes and Coorong Action Group and the Vice-Chair of the Finniss River Catchment Committee.

I strongly support the intent of Bill as one step towards saving the Goulburn and Murray Rivers and urge the Committee to consider the ramifications of the North-South pipeline for those of us who live downstream.

The Murray-Darling Basin is already significantly over-allocated. Rather than extract and divert more water from an already stressed system to augment Melbourne's water supply, measures need to be taken conserve, recycle and explore further water saving practices. All new developments should be required to source their own water rather than further deplete existing resources.

The guiding principles with respect to the River should be that an eco-system be understood as a living whole wherein all parts of the system are connected and damage to one part has ramifications for other parts of the system and thus the system as whole. Water is not just a commodity to be managed according to sound economic principles. In my view we cannot continue to look to engineering and technological fixes to solve what is basically a problem of over-allocation and mismanagement.

Yours sincerely,

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