



Northern Victorian Irrigators Inc.

Productivity Commission- Basin Implementation Plan

1. Changes needed to ensure water recovery targets are met:
 - a. Flood plain harvesting in NSW and Queensland need to be measured.
 - A Farm Dam agreement was made and implemented in Victoria 20 years ago. So why not measure the same in the northern Murray- Darling Basin. Similar metering legislation should be implemented in these two northern states.
 - At the present dams are still being constructed with no measurement in place.
 - b. Every irrigated property should be metered.

It is impossible to make decisions on unknown data. Metering would provide this data.

2. How could arrangements be improved
 - a. Environmental Water Plan and Management
 - More modernisation of channel works by piping water would reduce loss of water by evaporation and reduce maintenance on channels.
 - There is no monitoring of the quantities used for environmental flows , how they are used and their success or failure.

6. How well has community consultation and engagement been conducted?

How can this be improved?

 - a. Meeting consultation has been of meaningless consequence.
 - Any meeting we have attended has already set the agenda of answers required. The outcomes have already been devised by Murray- Darling Basin bureaucrats, the government and the Commission.
 - An example of this is the Barmah Choke scenario. Higher river flows have washed the banks in to exacerbate the Barmah Choke situation rather than from gold-mining in Rutherglen.

If the sand was being washed from Rutherglen it would have to come through and fill Lake Mulwala before washing downstream to the Barmah Choke.
 - Photographic & direct inspection can show how high river flows have eroded banks.
 - There needs to be a more open and honest system to speak with and gather information from grass roots people.

7. Adjustment to the plan:

- a. Irrigation is the lifeblood of Goulburn- Murray Irrigation District. Taking more water out of this area is going to put food-growing ability at risk, shut down industry and commerce and negatively impact aspects of so many communities.

9. Issues we wish to raise

- a. Why are we trying to get more water to South Australia?
- b. What is that water producing or what use is it serving apart from productive, consumptive and environmental needs.
- c. How is it an improvement to the environment ?
- d. What scientific knowledge is applied to this use ?

Environmental Flows.

- a. Our grave concern is that there is no audit of how these quantities are used, the scientific measuring of their success or failure and open reporting of those findings.

Our greatest concerns are that by taking more water out of the GMID the Commission and Government is :-

- **Putting food- producing ability at risk**
- **Buy-backs pushing up water prices making irrigators more dependent on the water market**
- **Negative social and economic impacts on our communities**
- **What positive environmental outcomes will be achieved and how will they be measured and reported on?**
- **Every previous Victorian Labour Water Minister has opposed any further buy-backs from Victoria as it was recognised that Victoria had already conceded their share of water recovery.**

DUDLEY BRYANT, CHAIR, Northern Victorian Irrigators Inc.