

18 August 2020

National Water Reform 2020
Productivity Commission
Locked Bag 2, Collins St East
Melbourne VIC 8003

Productivity Commission Inquiry into the Reform of the Australian Water Resources Sector

Dear Commissioners

There remain concerns amongst stakeholders about whether the NWI principles are being sufficiently applied in respect of the River Murray System. In our opinion, too much water is being lost in the operation of the River Murray system. However, it appears that there are established arrangements and processes in place to help the system's efficient operation and hold those who benefit accountable.

We hope that the NWI will improve transparency on river operations—and further work to investigate the impact of pressures such as expanding horticultural development downstream—must be delivered quickly to give greater confidence for the future. Furthermore, we believe there must be an assessment of a diverse range of both supply-side options (e.g. desalination, recycled water, inter-regional transfers) and demand-side measures (e.g. public education programs, voluntary and then mandatory water use restrictions, water efficiency measures and inclining block tariffs).

Further consideration also ought to be given to irrigation, without which a significant proportion of Australia's agricultural industries would either not exist or be greatly diminished.

Yours sincerely,

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