

Productivity Commission Murray Darling Basin Plan Implementation Review 2023

The Murray Darling Basin Plan is a living nightmare destroying communities and our environment.

It is so stupid that Govt is now for the third year in a row flooding the iconic Gunbower Forest, 8 months after a 1 in a 100-year flood. It's called just add water and walk away the mid storey the under storey in areas has all gone and the ground has become toxic. It's become a breeding ground for European Carp and a producer of toxic blackwater.

They have taken 1450GL out of region which was the third most productive in the Vic in year 2000. They have tried to shift water off 86% of the catchments privately owned farmland back to under 10% National Parks destroying the feeding and breeding grounds for 1000s of birds, animals, reptiles, aquatic life, and insects.

The Plan has led to the storage of excessive amounts of Environmental water and carryover, which has been the major cause of last year's 1in 100-year flood. Simply there was no airspace for seasonal inflows. Our Shire of 3735 sq kms and its population were all affected in some form. Mass destruction of farm infrastructure, houses, loss of urban and rural water supplies and mass livestock deaths. The loss of production enormous. Mental Health, domestic violence and suicides are all real issues. The Dams are already too full now, so this year looks like repeating flood events.

Have we been consulted yes, many times. You come you listen, but you don't **hear!** Nothing changes, it just gets worse.

I am yet to see a program aimed at helping the communities to adjust to the Basin Plan.

With so much visual damage already done to our region over the last decade, we want to see a completely independently funded diversely sourced committee charged with the responsibility of a cost benefit analysis of the plan outlining **the environmental benefit versus damage of environment to our Region**. We would also like to see a cost benefit analysis done on the social and economic benefits the Murray Darling Basin Plan has brought to our region.

We need honesty and transparency and some bureaucrats that will champion solutional change. What we want is recognition:

That people are a part of the Basin and the environment, and their well-being is as important.

Recognition that environmental outcomes occur on farms and private property as well as National Parks.

Recognition that no amount of water forced down our system will ever keep the Murray River mouth open for an extended period because the Great Southern Ocean won't allow it.

The loss of water and an extra 450GL has and will led to a massive loss of production effecting the Australian economy's ability to make a profit. It has also led to an increase price of food and fibre items on the supermarket shelf. Water buybacks only create a divisive dysfunctional system.

A mindset change by Government needs to happen, that we the communities living this nightmare have the solutions and to be acknowledged and not insulted. We want a Plan built on honesty and transparency not modelling but hard measured evidence, that focuses on quality outcomes for all.

Geoff Kendell Chairman

We are always available for an interactive tour of our region.