

**Draft Basin Plan – Initial Engagement to inform the development of the  
South Australian Government response**

**KEY VIEWS AND ISSUES RAISED AT THE MANNUM MEETING  
Mannum Community Club, Wednesday 21 December 2011**

**Hosted by the Honourable Paul Caica MP, Minister for Water and the River Murray**

**Overview of the meeting**

The meeting commenced with an opening address from the Minister for Water and the River Murray and presentations from Department for Water (DFW) officers on the State Government consultation process on its response to the draft Basin Plan and an initial appraisal of the draft Basin Plan.

The Minister noted the importance of a unified approach and community support to get the best possible outcomes from the final Basin Plan. The Minister also asked participants to disseminate information to their respective communities and groups.

Meeting participants provided their feedback and initial comments on the draft Basin Plan. The key views and issues expressed by participants have been grouped into common themes and summarised below.

*Basin Plan Process*

- Discussion about the process following the Murray Darling-Basin Authority's 20-week formal consultation period.
- It is important we seek to get the best Basin Plan possible as a starting point.

*Cultural Water*

- Discussion about the draft Plan's definition and policies for cultural water.
- Concern that cultural water is aligned with environmental water in the draft Plan.

*Water Quality and Environmental Water Management*

- Question regarding whether Environmental Land Management Allocation water should be considered environmental water under the draft Plan.
- Discussion about the need to maintain river heights between Lock 1 and the Murray Mouth to improve water quality and manage the risk of acid sulfate soils.
- Views that the Plan should include targets for river levels as well as water quality targets.
- The Plan should also provide for further water quality monitoring points in and around the Lakes Alexandrina and Albert.
- Concern regarding current salinity levels in Lake Albert.
- There are uncertainties regarding the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder's intention to trade environmental water.
- Concern regarding campaigns, such as those run by the Myths and the Murray group, that seek to have the barrages removed.
- Concern that the draft Plan fails to adequately take into account the impacts of climate change.
- The South Australian Government science review should consider the ecological risks of the proposed water recovery scenario.

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#### *2015 Review*

- Support for an adaptive management approach to the Basin Plan but concern that there may not be adequate information available in 2015 to assess the effectiveness of environmental water delivery.
- Noted that the 2015 review would be an opportunity to increase or decrease the water recovery target. There are varying viewpoints about this matter.

#### *Groundwater extraction*

- Concern about proposed increases to groundwater extraction limits under the draft Plan. Consideration needs to be given to the impact on surface water resources where these systems are connected.
- Question regarding whether the recovery of groundwater from the Eastern Mount Lofty Ranges contributes to the shared reduction for the River Murray if a conversion factor was applied to it.

#### *Recognising South Australia's history of responsible water management*

- Concern that the draft Plan does not recognise South Australia's past responsible behaviour and early adoption of water saving and efficiency measures.
- View that the Eastern States must move to pipe water instead of maintaining open channels.
- Views that water should be recovered where efficiency gains can be made or where there are willing sellers.

#### *Assisting communities to transition and adapt*

- Need for greater clarity around transitional arrangements to assist vulnerable communities.
- Need to seek new opportunities to enhance associated industries such as tourism, boating and fishing through a healthy river.
- There needs to be a 'do nothing' socio-economic analysis undertaken as a comparison. There should also be recognition of the difficulties faced in South Australia due to over allocation and drought.

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