

**Julian Zanatta - Rice Grower, Benerembah (Ricegrowers Australia board member)**

We are struggling to come to terms on where (and if) we spend our money on infrastructure upgrades. This is the uncertainty the buybacks bring to our business. This then hurts the wider local community, squeezing other small businesses, farmers and producers.

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**John Bonetti – Irrigator, Griffith**

We produce a lot of rice, wheat and barley, and fortunately a fair bit of grapes. We have never sold a litre of water and don't intend to. And that's what is concerning farmers like me - voluntary buybacks will likely become compulsory buybacks if they don't get enough water.

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**Cr Darryl Jardine – Mayor, Carrathool Shire**

Irrigation not only supports our local community, but major regional cities like Griffith. We travel there to buy vehicles, irrigation equipment, pick up supplies and shopping. So, buybacks not only hurt local production in rural towns, but the flow on effect also means families move, which means less local professionals, less schoolchildren, less local shops...less of everything!

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**Clifford Ashby - Coleambally Irrigation CEO**

We deliver water to around 500 Farms, about 300 different businesses in the area. Buybacks mean we can't make accurate decisions on what infrastructure to replace, and that means farmers who don't sell and try to stay in business will have much higher costs.

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**Brian Savage – Irrigator, Yoogali**

Government's talk about decentralisation. Our capital cities are overflowing, which means people are looking to come to the country areas. Now they go and take more water from us which reduces economic opportunities in the region - no one will come to live here if they can't find a job.

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**Liz Stott – Irrigator, Gogeldrie (Deputy Chair - Cotton Australia)**

As farmers we are always accountable for every single millilitre of water we use, what we produce with it, how many people we employ and where we spend our money. So, where is the accountability from the federal government to make sure the environmental water they buy actually achieves good outcomes.

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**Trevor Clark – Irrigator, Logie Brae**

When the Basin Plan commenced, we had 900 students at the local high school - today we have less than 300. Families leave the area because there's no certainty, there's no security in farming. This is absolutely devastating for the whole community, a situation you can see repeated throughout the Basin.

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**Peter Herrmann— Irrigator, Murrumbidgee (President of Ricegrowers Australia)**

Irrigators have been whipping boys for 20 years and we've never had more efficient farms. Murrumbidgee, Murray and Coleambally Irrigation each have to account for every drop of water, so we must hold the government accountable for where environmental water is then used.

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**Brett Jones – Murrumbidgee Irrigation CEO**

When you think about the actual cost of buyback, at today's prices, the government is looking around \$7 billion at today's prices. In reality you can then double that! So, here we have a cost-of-living crisis, a housing crisis, a climate change crisis and the government plans to spend billions and billions of dollars to make small, incremental improvements in river health.

So for 700 gigs, you shut Murrumbidgee irrigation down that's what we're talking about. If you seriously want to buy 700 gegalitres of water back, you shut us down, or you shut Murray down or you shut Victoria down.

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**Michael Pisasale - Murray Irrigation employee**

We have a government which is prepared to spend \$1 billion on buyback, but it will cost our communities that every year.

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**Brett Stonestreet - General Manager, Griffith City Council**

Back in 2010 community confidence was rocked by the Basin reform process. The Office of Local Government reduced growth projections for Griffith by 20 percent. That dried-up public sector investment which then impacted private sector investment.

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**Sandra Williams – Irrigator, Leeton**

We were told these new changes to Basin water recovery would be subject to continuous research, but the research isn't due until 2024 to 2026 and these changes are being put on us without the evidence to back it up.

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