

Griffith Business Chamber welcomes the opportunity to make a submission Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee Inquiry into the Provisions of the Water Act 2007

It is clear that the release of the Murray-Darling Basin Authority's Guide to the Basin Plan in 2010 has significantly affected Basin communities, businesses, economies and property values due to uncertainty.

The MDBA have clearly indicated that the interpretation and their legal advice was that the environment was given primacy and that once these requirements had been considered, then the task of the MDBA was to optimise the social and economic consequences.

The Hon. Tony Burke indicated that there was sufficient scope within the Act to ensure that social, economic and environmental matters were treated equally in the Basin Plan.

The view was derived from legal advice from the Australian Government Solicitor that the Minister made public. Incoming MDBA Chair, the Hon. Craig Knowles also reiterated those comments.

The Griffith Business Chamber supports a balanced approach to deliver on social, economic and environmental aspirations of the Basin's communities.

While the Minister and the new MDBA Chair have indicated an ability to deliver a balanced approach the ambiguity within the Water Act 2007 remains.

So therefore the ability for different interpretations will continue to threaten Basin communities and it is for this reason we ask the Act to be re-written.

If the Government can deliver a balanced Basin Plan, there remains longer term concerns that subsequent Basin Plans may not so uncertainty will continue.

To remove any doubt and to provide certainty and security we ask that the water Act 2007 be reviewed & re-written with clear balance.

Yours Sincerely,

Paul Pierotti

Water & Government Representative for Griffith Business Chamber.

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