

# CLARENCE VALLEY CONSERVATION COALITION Inc.

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17 March 2011

Committee Secretary  
Senate Legal and Constitutional Committees  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Email: [legcon.sen@aph.gov.au](mailto:legcon.sen@aph.gov.au)

Dear Sir/Madam

## **Senate Inquiry into the Provisions of the Water Act**

The Clarence Valley Conservation Coalition (CVCC) is a Grafton-based community group which has members throughout the Clarence Valley in northern NSW. Since its formation in 1988, it has been actively involved in a wide range of environmental matters in the local community and beyond. One of the major interests of the CVCC over the years has been river health – in relation to the Clarence catchment and other river systems throughout the country.

The CVCC believes that

- the Water Act 2007 does not need to be amended.
- the Act correctly recognises the need to ensure that there are healthy ecosystems by reducing the water extracted for irrigation - unsustainable extraction which has led to severely stressed rivers throughout the Basin.
- the Act acknowledges the decisions of what are sustainable levels of extraction must be based on science. Therefore any call for extractions based on a so-called balance of environmental and social considerations should not be accepted. Social and economic considerations have led to the current over-allocation and environmental damage.

The CVCC strongly supports state and federal governments' endeavours to improve the health of the degraded Murray-Darling system. Decisive action is needed to restore Basin health. Weakening the Water Act because of pressure from those concerned only with the short-term will do nothing for the health of the river systems or the long-term viability of the communities which ultimately depend on healthy river systems.

Yours faithfully

Leonie Blain  
Hon Secretary