



# **MURRAY DARLING BASIN PLAN**

## **What do we know at this point? (2007 to 2023)**

- ✓ Election/Politics; decisions in peak of Millennium Drought,
- ✓ Major errors in Plan, but MDBA & Govts stick to script!
- ✓ Not a whole of Basin Plan; why?
- ✓ Public thinks an environmental plan ? What else is driving decisions
- ✓ Moving water from A to B? Has anyone asked....beneficiaries?



# Basin Plan (2750GL) - Water recovery



## Northern Basin (total inflows 13,547GL/Y)

390GL reduced by 70 GL to 320GL (Northern Basin Review 2018)

- but review did not include Flood Plain Harvesting figures
- Review reduced environmental flows to Menindee from 143GL down to 41GL
- MDBA decisions do NOT require connectivity flows from Northern Basin to Menindee or Murray River
- Northern Basin water recovery = **15% of SDL**

## Southern Basin (Total inflows 15,959GL/yr)

2289GL less 650GL environmental projects

- Southern Basin water recovery=**82% of SDL**
- Regulated & Government controlled system
- Government(s) & MDBA decisions now mean NSW Murray & Northern Vic Rivers are required to make up for lack of Darling flows
- Murray River can't replace others!



image: Murray River maps Wikipedia

## Basin Plan

- Concentrates water recovery & delivery of 80GL to SA border: Southern Basin –mainly via Murray River

## Basin Plan 2000GL for CLLMM:

- But Coorong Catchment not included, why?
- SA Drainage Schemes; diverts natural catchment flows of the Coorong out to Southern Ocean = 450GL (yr 2000)
- SA Marketing campaign for more water based on claims for the CLLMM, existing evidence confirms even floods are not the solution !

# Water Act 2007 – Peak of Millennium drought

**QUOTE 1: Parliament of Australia: Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport: Hansard – Management of the Murray Darling Basin Inquiry: Ms Jody Swirepik, Executive Director, Environmental Management, Murray-Darling Basin Authority stated:**

- *We set the environmental outcomes and desirable flow regimes from a purely environmental point of view—what we would like to actually achieve. We knew right at the very beginning that some of the flow regimes we were identifying, which we know are good for the environment, **are actually quite large floods**. Within our full suite of indicators, for instance, 125,000 on the Riverland-Chowilla floodplain is a big flood in that part of the world. The floods in 2010-11, I think, got up to 93,000 and **they flooded some towns on the way down**.*

**QUOTE 2: Former Premier of South Australia – Jay Weatherill**

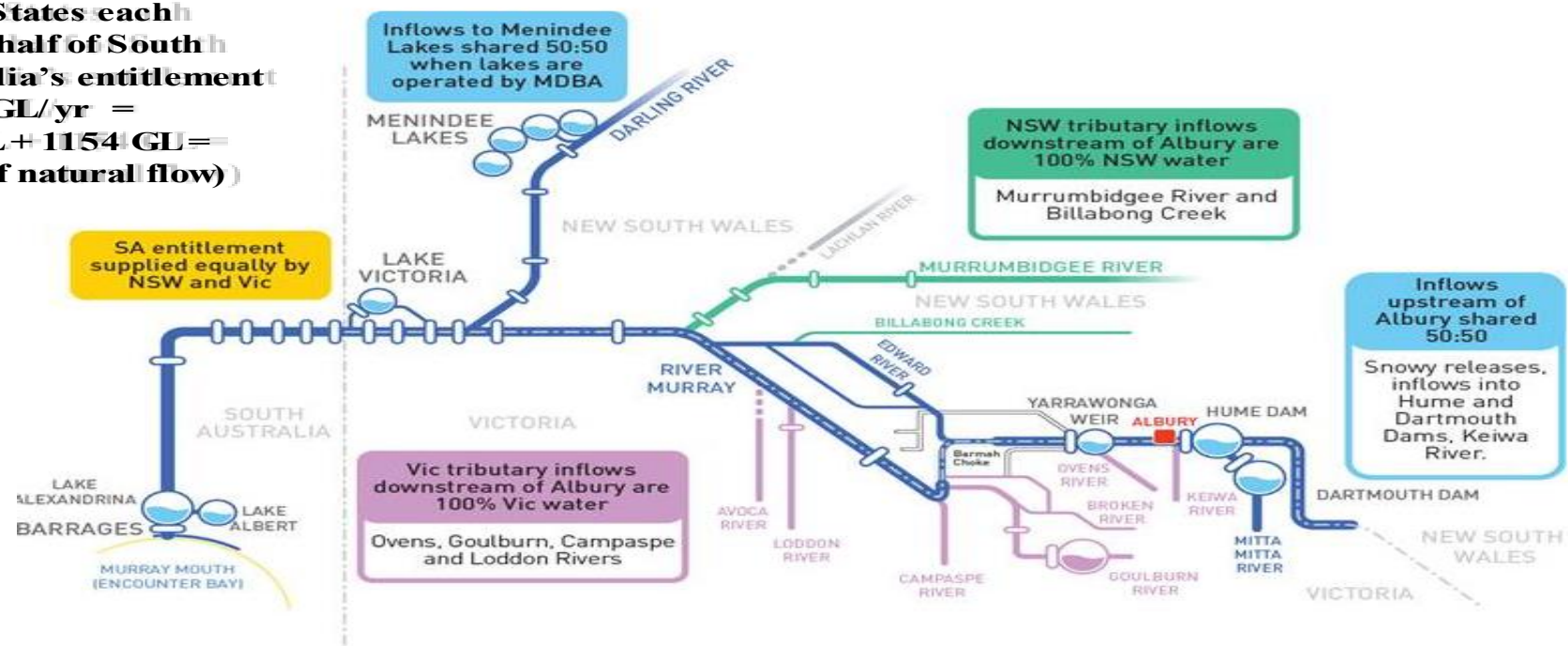
- *"I'm prepared to use ***whatever tools there are in the political tool kit to get the results for South Australians,***"*
- *"\$2 million of taxpayers' money had been set aside for the campaign. **"Everyone knows how politics works -- if you crank up the pressure, you get the outcome,"***
- *"farmers who ***are worried about flooding from the basin plan do not deserve compensation*** because they historically extracted too much water from the system"*

# Is South Australia short of water?

## No - SA water is secured before NSW & Vic

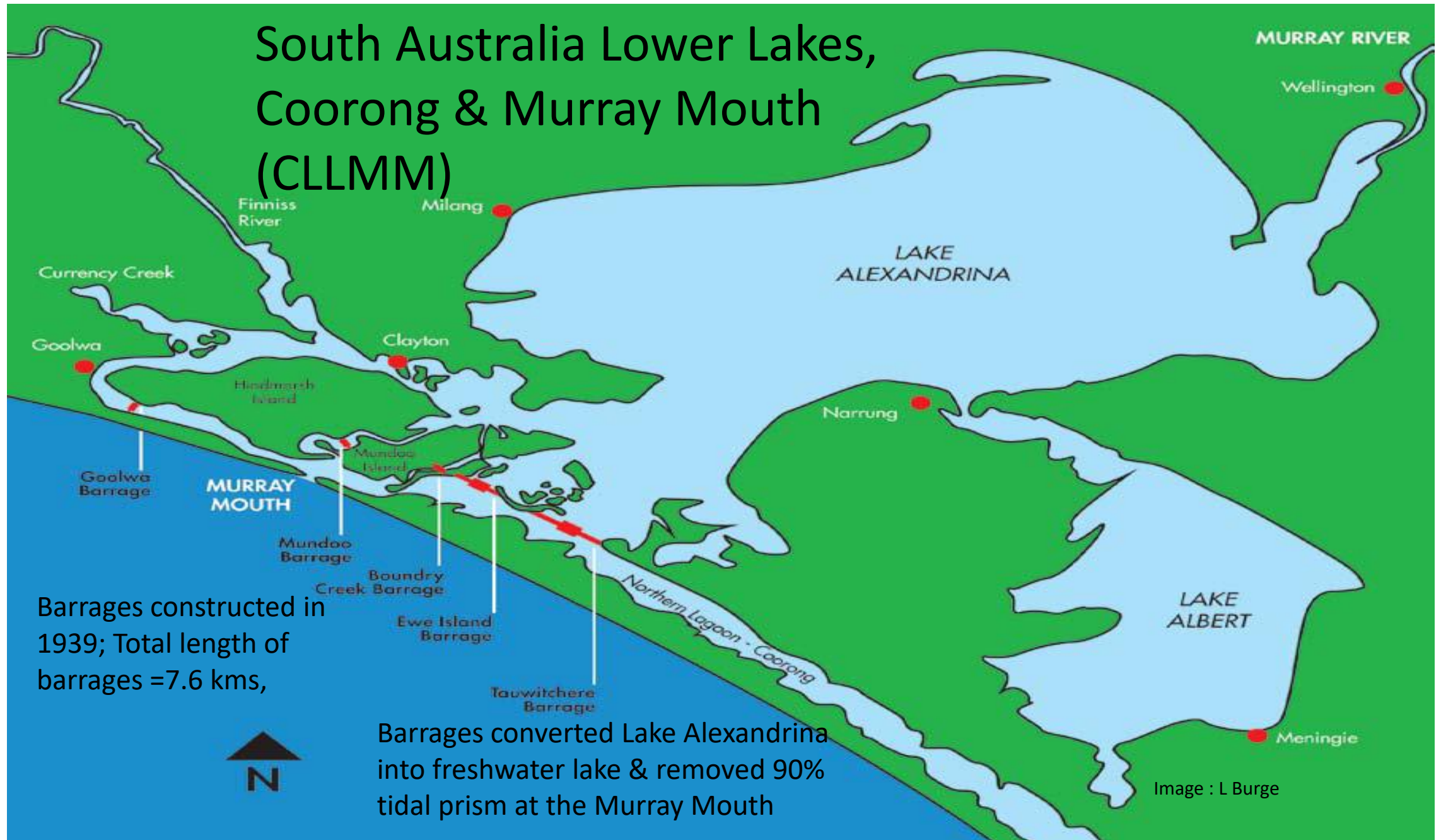
### The 'Recipe' for Water Sharing in Tier 1

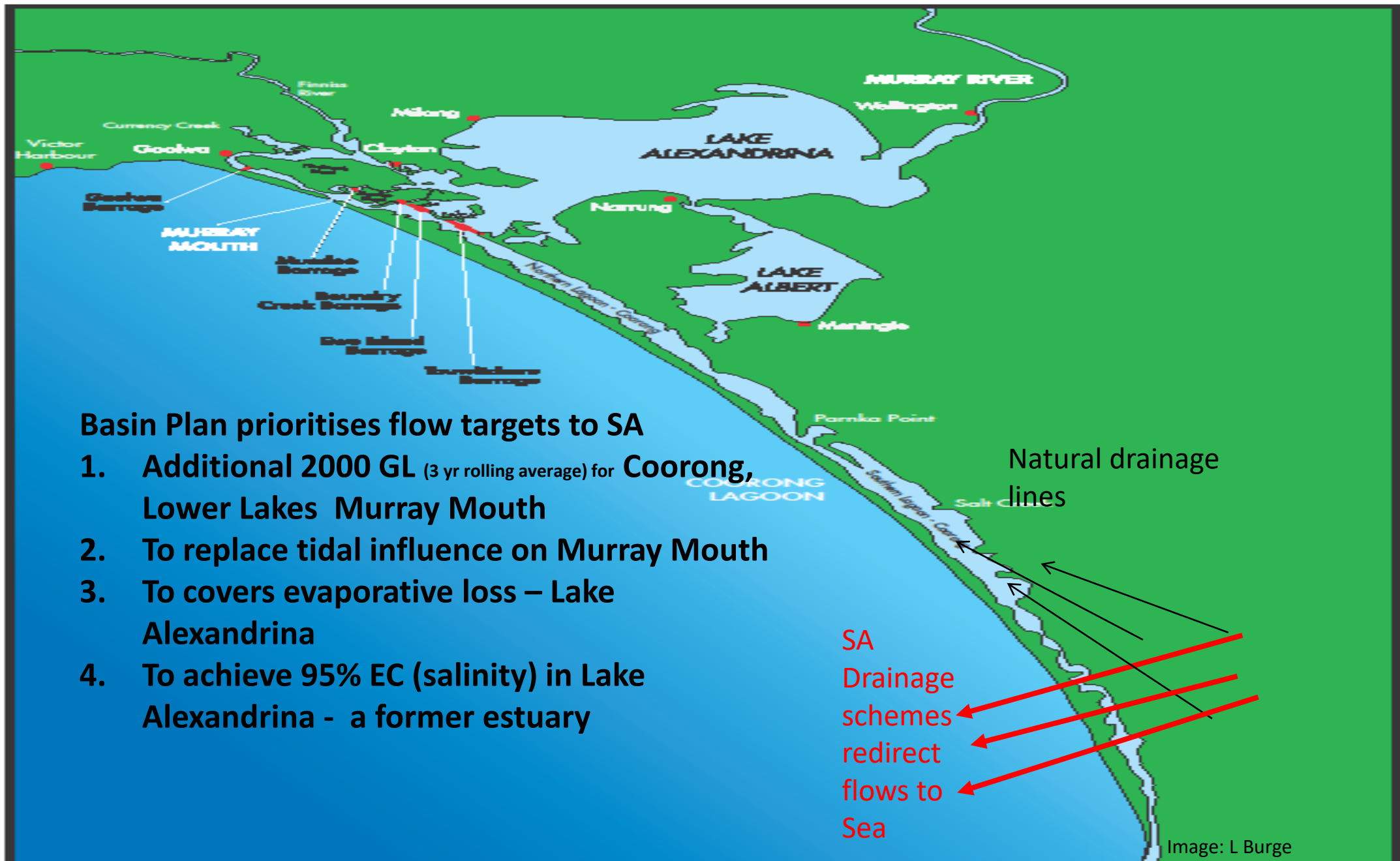
Upper States each supply half of South Australia's entitlement  
(1850 GL/yr = 696 GL + 1154 GL = 13% of natural flow)





# South Australia Lower Lakes, Coorong & Murray Mouth (CLLMM)





# History lesson

**1903** – Report by Government experts “*construction of a weir or dam in the tidal compartment of a river has been invariably found to result in shoaling .....*

*When supply is insufficient to overcome tidal action.....supply of fresh water falls off, the sea water takes it place...*

*In the recent drought (1903 Federation drought).. if barrages had been erected 5 yrs ago, it would have required nearly the whole available flow of the river to keep the lakes sweet”*

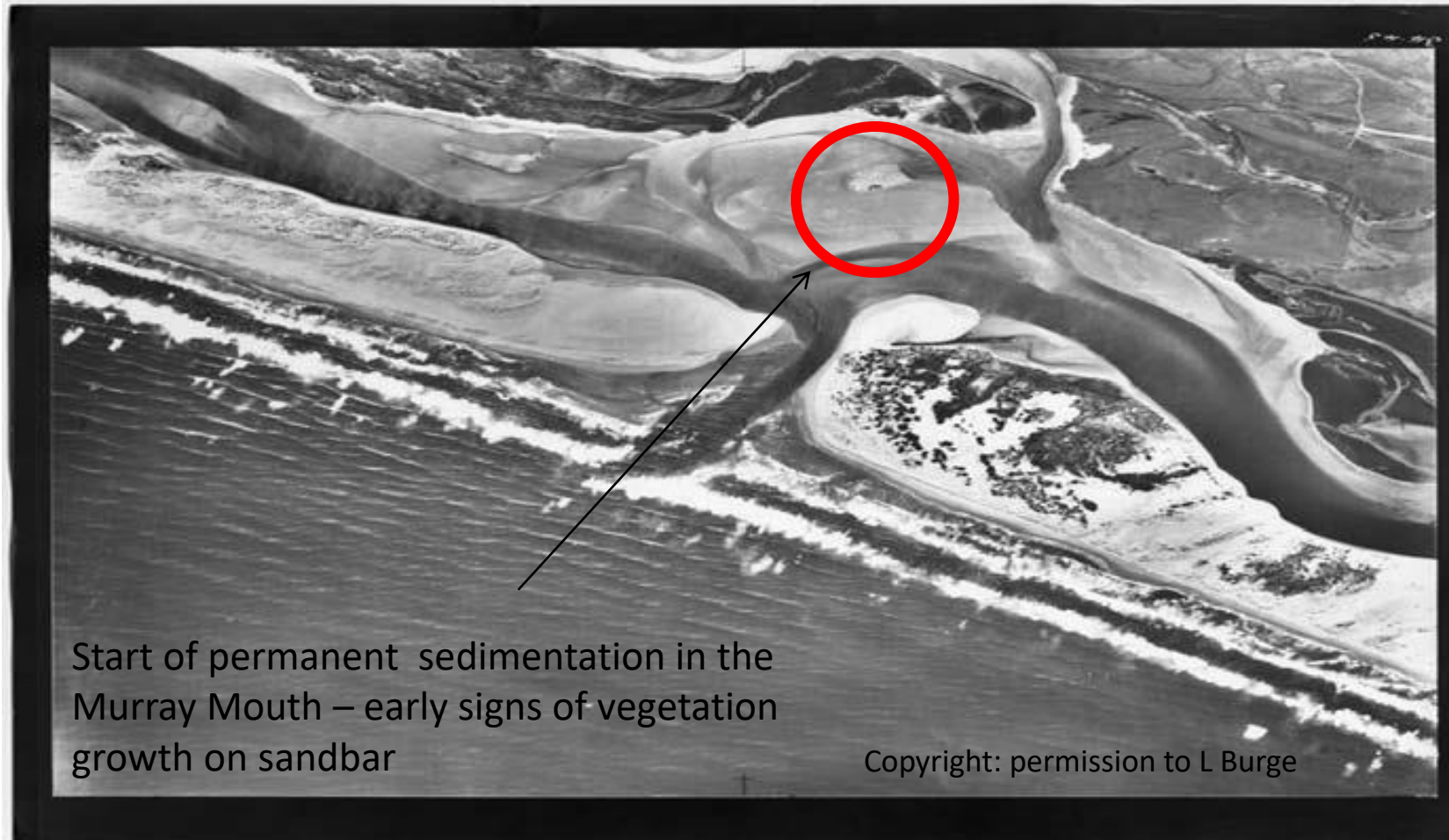
**WISE OLD GENTLEMEN in 1903.. THEIR PREDICTIONS**  
**WERE RIGHT!!!**

Despite predictions, SA Govt commenced planning to convert estuary & construct Barrages in 1903





# Murray Mouth 1949; 9 yrs after barrages built



Start of permanent sedimentation in the  
Murray Mouth – early signs of vegetation  
growth on sandbar

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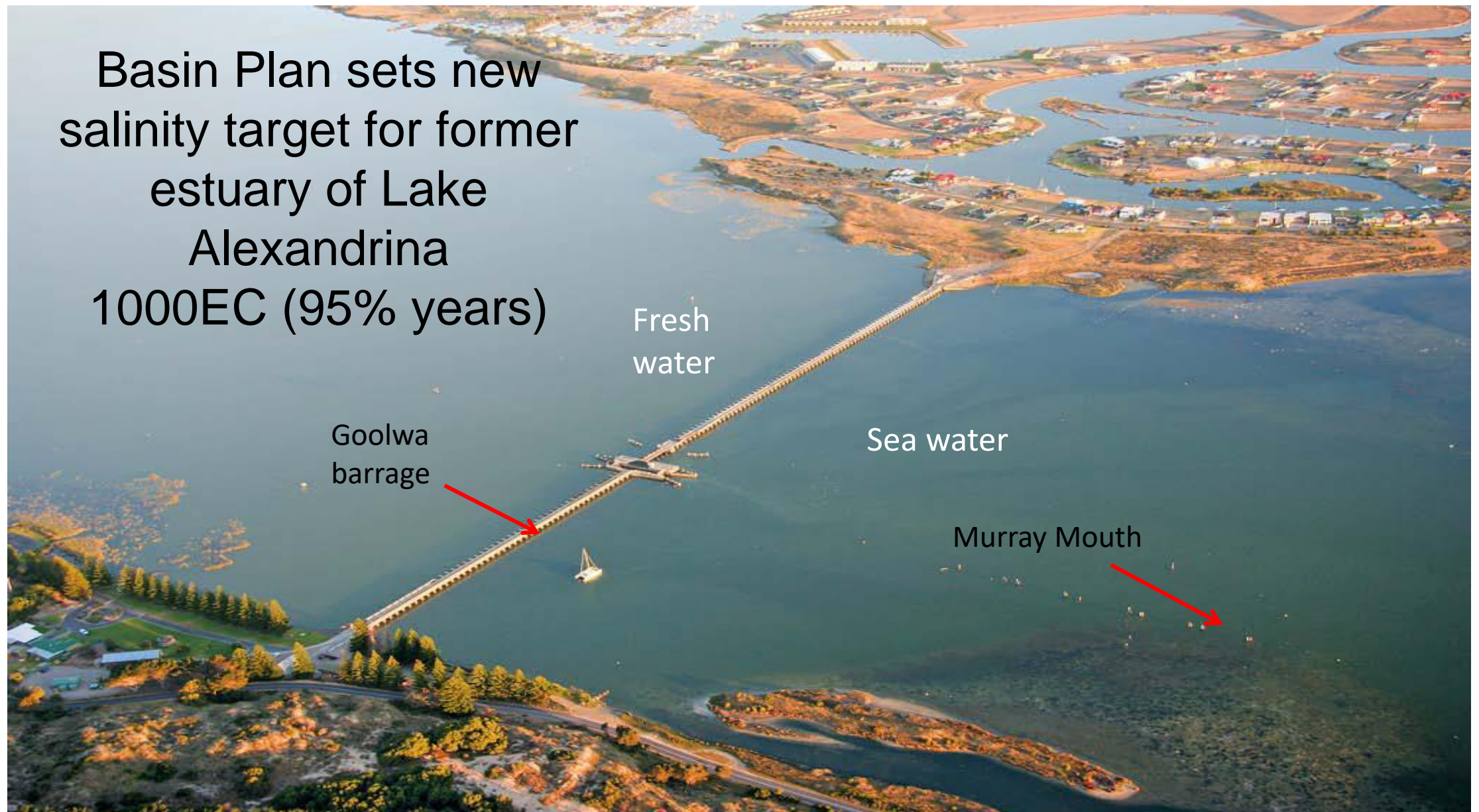


# HINDMARSH ISLAND – HOW NATURAL IS THE ENVIRONMENT?





Basin Plan sets new  
salinity target for former  
estuary of Lake  
Alexandrina  
1000EC (95% years)

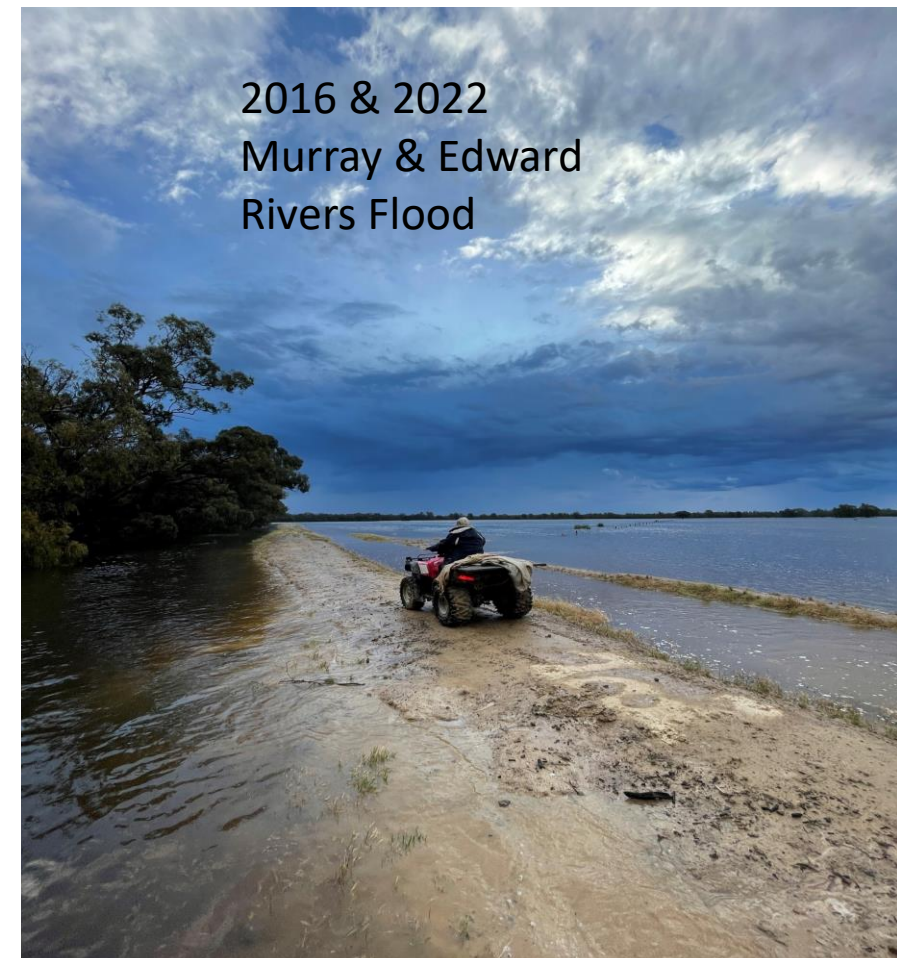




**CLLMM a highly modified environment !  
Commercial & Recreational benefits in SA  
but at what cost?**







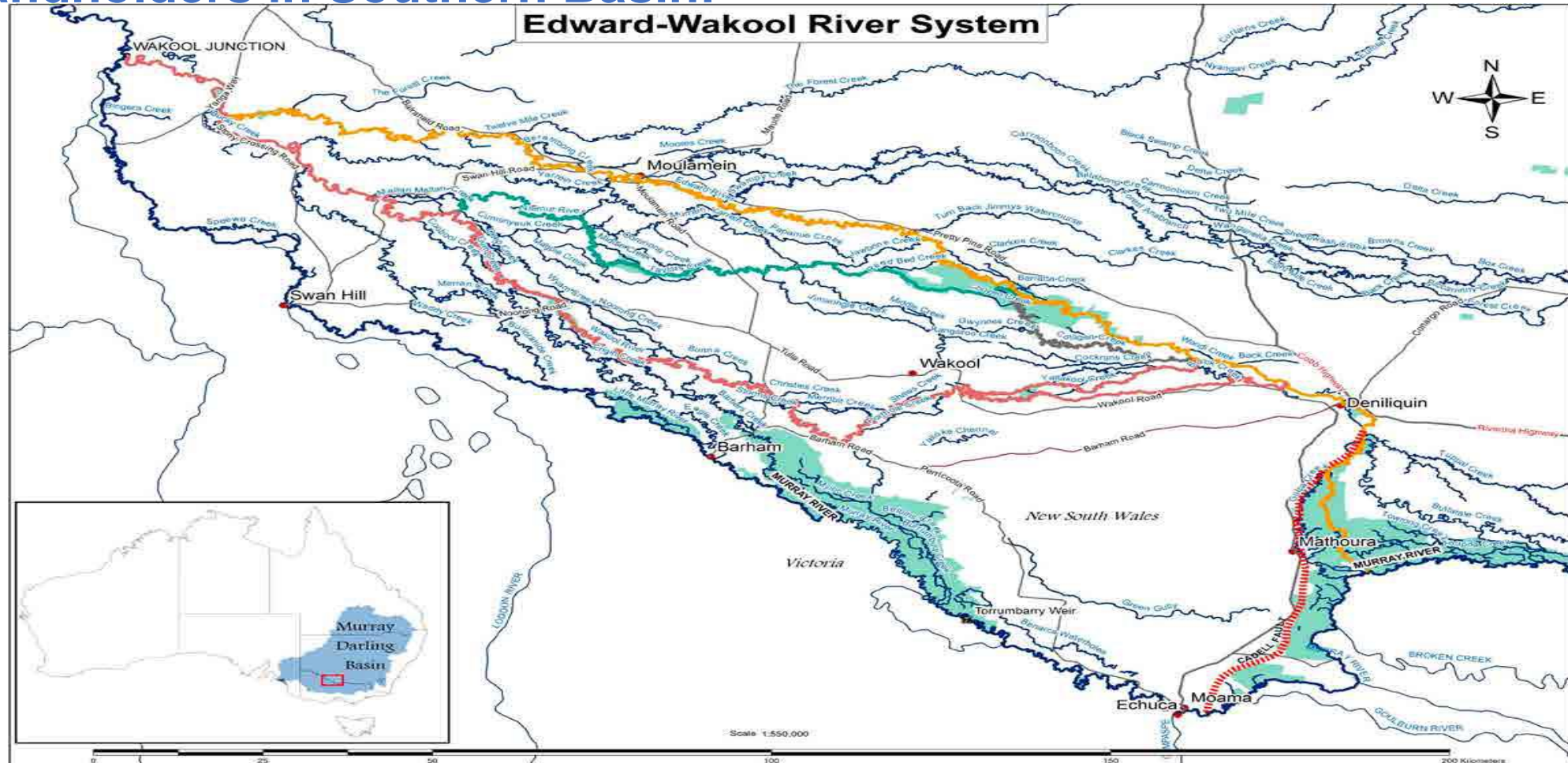
2016 & 2022  
Murray & Edward  
Rivers Flood



# CONSTRAINTS MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

No compensation! No flood risks management strategies!

Governments removed their own liability! 4000 to 6000 impacted landholders in Southern Basin!





# WHAT IS NEEDED NOW

## *An Adaptive whole of Basin Plan to deliver multiple benefits”*

- No to further 450GL water recovery from NSW Murray & Victoria's Goulburn Valley in Southern Basin
- Unacceptable industry/communities impacts + major flood risks already!
- Ensure connectivity issues Darling River to Menindee to Murray \*
- Localised projects must occur in South Australia to benefit CLLMM \*
- Allow complementary measures eg Native Fish re-stocking, carp control, fish screens/ladders, fishways, weed management, & achieve community participation by valuing people as partners
- Volumes of Environmental water now = 4,623GL