



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MEDIA RELEASE

Issued: 30 August 2002

Standing Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Extension for submissions

**Inquiry into future water supplies for
Australia's rural industries and communities**

The deadline for making submissions to the federal parliamentary inquiry into the future of water supplies in rural and regional Australia has been extended by six weeks.

The House of Representatives Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry is undertaking a detailed inquiry into current and future water availability, focusing in particular on the role of the Commonwealth in ensuring adequate and sustainable supply of water in rural and regional Australia.

The deadline for submissions has been extended from today, 30 August, to 31 October 2002.

House Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Committee Chair, Mrs Kay Elson MP, said the extension was to allow people who have expressed interest in making submissions time to develop detailed responses.

"There has been a great deal of interest in the inquiry, and we want to ensure that we receive the best information that we can," Mrs Elson said.

The inquiry will examine water availability in all jurisdictions, and in particular the sustainable provision of future water supplies for Australia's rural industries and communities.

Matters examined will include the provision, allocation, distribution and usage of water, issues surrounding weather prediction and current scientific research for adapting natural processes in the face of climate change

Management of the Murray-Darling Basin is also central to the inquiry. The River Murray has been named Australia's number one endangered place in the 2002 National Trust Endangered Places list.

The inquiry arose out of a request by the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, the Hon. Warren Truss, MP.

After submissions have been considered, public hearings will be held to collect further evidence.

For **media comment**, please contact:

Mrs Kay Elson, House Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Committee Chair, on (07) 3807 6340

For **background information**, including the full terms of reference, please contact the Committee secretariat on (02) 6277 4500 or visit the Inquiry website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/primind/index.htm>